



CONTENTS

Page

Agenda item 53:
Draft Declaration on the Elimination of Dis-
crimination against Women
Report of the Third Committee 1

President: Mr. Corneliu MANESCU (Romania).

AGENDA ITEM 53

Draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women

REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE (A/6880 AND
CORR.1)

*Mr. Mohammed (Nigeria), Rapporteur of the Third
Committee, presented the report of that Committee
and then spoke as follows:*

1. Mr. MOHAMMED (Nigeria), Rapporteur of the Third Committee: It is, I think, on the behalf of all men, a great honour for me to present this report on the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The history of the Declaration began in 1963 and this history is given, very briefly, in the introduction to the report [A/6880 and Corr.1, paras. 2-6]. The Third Committee received this report from the Commission on the Status of Women during the current session. The report was presented to the Third Committee last year as well, but was returned to the Commission for further review. The proceedings of the Third Committee, which followed during the discussion before the adoption of the declaration, are reflected in part II of the report [*ibid.*, paras. 7-14].

2. The Commission on the Status of Women, when reviewing this declaration, had taken into account various amendments, various suggestions and various comments which were made during the twenty-first session of the General Assembly. It may be noted that the Committee first held a general debate on the declaration and then considered the various amendments submitted, in view of the various comments given, and made amendments to the preamble and to the substantive articles.

3. However, throughout the debate on the Declaration it was the view of almost all the members of the Third Committee that the revised text prepared by the Commission on the Status of Women was a much better draft than the one first presented to the Third Committee during the twenty-first session of the General Assembly. Members of the Committee emphasized that this draft Declaration aimed essentially at

setting goals that should be achieved and that for that reason the draft Declaration should look as far as possible into the future and be as advanced as possible. The Committee did attach considerable importance to the draft Declaration, because it approved the preamble and most of the articles unanimously.

4. Those amendments, and the voting on them that followed, can be found in part III of the report [*ibid.*, paras. 15-111]. The preamble itself and almost all the individual articles of the draft Declaration were adopted unanimously and in the end the draft Declaration itself was adopted by acclamation.

5. When approved by the General Assembly, this Declaration will take its place alongside the other most important documents adopted by the United Nations in this field. This is a draft Declaration that has been described by many members of the Third Committee as one of the most important charters for women's rights. It represents for the whole world a hope for the promotion and encouragement of a respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, without distinction of race or sex, language or religion. This document will take its place alongside other documents such as the international covenants on human rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted by this Assembly previously.

6. The draft Declaration represents a landmark. It marks the culmination of a history of efforts made not only by the United Nations but by various organs, including certain non-governmental and some governmental organizations in the efforts of humanity finally to eliminate any kind of discrimination against women.

7. It may be recalled that with the adoption of this Declaration, the General Assembly will have fulfilled one of the tasks it set itself in 1965 in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights. It had already been decided in resolution 2081 (XX) of the General Assembly that before 1968 this Declaration should have been finished and adopted by the General Assembly. The Third Committee has attached a great deal of importance to this Declaration, not only in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights but also in relation to the aspirations held by both men and women throughout the world in bringing into play the utilization of the vast resources of women to help the social and economic progress of the human kind.

8. As I said earlier, it is, perhaps fitting that a man should be presenting this draft Declaration, which reflects one of the greatest aspirations of all women, for adoption by the General Assembly.

Pursuant to rule 68 of the rules of procedure, it was decided not to discuss the report of the Third Committee.

9. The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I call on the representative of Ghana.

10. Mrs. WILMOT (Ghana): My delegation would like to ask for a separate vote on the words "in all cases the interest of the child shall be paramount" in sub-paragraph 2 (b) of article 6 [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112]. In doing that, we hope that we are not in any way delaying the adoption of this Declaration. On the contrary, we are convinced that it is in our interest to adopt a good Declaration. We are all aware of the history behind the addition of those words to the original sub-paragraph (b) which was adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women.

11. Perhaps I should refresh the memories of the representatives. The proponents of this amendment had intended to delete sub-paragraph 2 (c) of article 6 and therefore combine sub-paragraphs (b) and (c). Unfortunately, the Committee accepted only the addition of the phrase, "in all cases the interest of the child shall be paramount" and rejected the proposal to delete sub-paragraph 2 (c) of article 6. We now find ourselves repeating that sentence in both sub-paragraphs. However, while the sentence is appropriate in sub-paragraph (c), where reference is specifically made to children, it is out of place in sub-paragraph (b) because that sub-paragraph deals with equal rights for men and women as individuals rather than their rights and duties in relation to any children that they might have.

12. My delegation has been encouraged to ask for a separate vote on this sentence by a consensus amongst many delegations that a deletion of this sentence would improve the draft Declaration without subtracting at all from its substance.

13. The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I shall now call in turn on those representatives who wish to explain their votes before the vote.

14. Mr. TOMOROWICZ (Poland): Before I dwell upon the subject of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112]; I should like to take this opportunity to say a few words about the great anniversary which concurs with this very day. I consider it my great honour and privilege to convey from this rostrum, not only on behalf of the Polish delegation, but also on behalf of the delegations of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mongolia and Romania, to the delegations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic our warmest and most sincere congratulations and best wishes on the fiftieth anniversary of the great Socialist October Revolution. That these words of congratulation and warm appreciation should come from this rostrum is fully justified, to say the least, by the fact that the principle of the safeguarding of peace was set forth at the international forum by the Socialist Revolution as one of its fundamental premises.

15. The first legal act of the revolutionary Power was the historic Decree on Peace issued on 8

November 1917—that is, on the very day that Soviet power was constituted. The decree defined war as "the greatest of crimes against humanity" and called upon all Governments and all peoples of the world to make peace.

16. The idea of peace has become inseparable from the policy of the Soviet Union. During the Second World War the USSR was the main force that, together with the allies, brought mankind protection and liberation from the slavery forced upon it by aggressive fascist States aiming at the conquest of the world and the extermination of whole nations. The idea of freedom of people is another basic principle of the great Revolution. We Poles shall never forget that, during the first days of their existence, the revolutionary authorities of Soviet Russia proclaimed null and void the partitions of Poland, thus helping the Polish nation to regain its independence after more than a hundred years of foreign domination.

17. The ideas of freedom of peoples, of peace, fraternity and equality among nations, gathered their momentum after the Second World War when a whole family of countries entered the socialist path of construction. Marked by political, social and economic progress, the tremendous tempo of development of the Soviet Union must be admired by the whole world. After fifty years of its existence, from a backward and poverty-stricken country, it has become one of the major Powers, which ten years ago initiated the conquest of outer space.

18. The ideals of the great October Revolution carried into effect by the first socialist country also had tremendous impact upon the struggle of national liberation movements on the continents of Africa and Asia. In the course of more than twenty years of the existence of the United Nations, a historic process has taken place, a process of disintegration of the colonial empires, of the winning of independence by peoples of Asia and Africa, a process to which the United Nations has contributed in great part. It should be remembered that this process took place under conditions of the prevailing influence of socialist ideas, supporting both the struggle for liberation of the peoples in the colonies and the action on decolonization undertaken by the United Nations. There is no walk of life in the world of today which has not been influenced by the ideas of the October Revolution and the fact of the socialist system. They have become an inspiration and a driving force in the struggle for independence and equality of nations, for progress and peace.

19. May I now come to the question of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Polish delegation attaches particular importance to its adoption by the General Assembly.

20. The fundamental idea behind the draft Declaration is that social and economic development and the well-being and peace of the world require the full participation of women as well as of men in all fields of human endeavour. The adoption of the draft Declaration will constitute a new achievement of the United Nations in the promotion of human rights. It provides for the necessary measures to be taken to guarantee the realization of the principle of full equality of men

and women in the political, economic, social and cultural life of nations.

21. The very important role of women in family life, particularly in the education of children, has been duly emphasized in the draft Declaration. However, if women are to enjoy economic rights without interference with their obligations in family life, an extensive social policy should be envisaged and carried out, including the creation and development of adequate social services. The draft Declaration rightly points out that necessity.

22. Thus the draft Declaration recapitulates and supplements the ideas proclaimed in other United Nations instruments, notably, the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international covenants on human rights, as well as other conventions of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies.

23. The draft Declaration which we are about to adopt constitutes a charter of the rights of women. Its importance consists not only in the reflection of the actual progress achieved in a number of countries, but also in the stipulation of the ultimate principles which should be included in the programmes of social development of every country.

24. To adopt this charter is an obligation towards humanity itself, dictated to us by the annals of history that are filled with examples of women who, under conditions of inequality, succeeded in becoming great national and international figures—fighters, leaders, heroines, prominent scientists. May I be permitted to recall here one such example, that of Maria Sklodowska Curie, a great Polish physicist and chemist, twice honoured with the Nobel Prize, a great patriot and humanist, a woman of utmost modesty, who devoted her whole life to science, searching for ways and means to reduce and eliminate human suffering. The centenary of her birth has been celebrated recently in the two homelands that were hers, Poland and France, as well as in many other countries of the world, under the auspices of UNESCO and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Neither should we forget those outstanding women who are now playing an active part in the struggle for national liberation, independence and peace.

25. The draft Declaration opens a new stage in the activities of the United Nations with regard to the position of women. The achievement of the objectives that it proclaims can be furthered through the United Nations programme of consultative services in the field of human rights, to be carried out by means of regional seminars on the social and political education of women, publications on the situation of women, and other means at the disposal of our Organization.

26. The Polish delegation feels particularly happy and honoured to have been able to contribute both to the initiation and the elaboration of the Declaration that we are now to adopt. While, with the sense of profound satisfaction, we are giving it our full support, we earnestly hope that it will be adopted through a unanimous vote of the Assembly.

27. We can consider it significant and particularly befitting that the date on which the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will be

adopted converges with the fiftieth anniversary of the great Socialist October Revolution, the revolution that had among its ideas the one of complete freedom and equality of women, and which first carried this idea fully into effect.

28. Mr. ADEBO (Nigeria): I wish to say a word or two on the proposal put forward by the representative of Ghana. She was referring to a confusion that arose, I regret to say, partly as a result of a well-meaning proposal on the part of my delegation in the Committee to amend article 6 of the draft Declaration [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112]. Part of the proposal was accepted, part of it was rejected, with the resultant complication to which the representative of Ghana refers. The Nigerian delegation therefore has no difficulty in supporting the proposal of the representative of Ghana that we should take this opportunity to remove that confusion from this very important document.

29. Mr. President, if you and the Assembly will permit me, I should, like the distinguished diplomat who preceded me on this rostrum, wish to refer to an event of historic significance not only to socialist countries but to all the world. The Nigerian delegation heartily joins with other delegations here in extending most cordial congratulations to the Government and peoples of the Soviet Union on this, the fiftieth anniversary of a revolution that has transformed their country practically out of all recognition from what it was in the Czarist days.

30. Today the Soviet Union ranks among the leading countries of the world in the arts, in education, in industrialization and, of course, in the general application of science and technology. In terms of political and military power it has only one rival in the world. However, what we of the countries of Africa wish to emphasize today is the interest that the Soviet Union has taken in the movement for the liberation of colonial peoples from subjection to foreign masters and the preservation of their unity and territorial integrity.

31. The Nigerian delegation takes this opportunity to express, through the Soviet delegation, its warmest gratitude for this interest to the Soviet Government and peoples. We wish them even greater achievements and glory in a future that we hope and pray will be one of greater happiness, greater security and greater prosperity for us all.

32. Mr. REYES (Philippines): My delegation will vote for the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112] with full awareness of its imperfections. The Draft as it stands is undoubtedly susceptible of further improvement. The preamble, for instance, could be made more concise, lucid and eloquent, as befits a Declaration addressed to the whole world. The ambiguity in paragraph 1 of article 6 on the relationship between the unity and harmony of the family and the extension to women of equal rights with men in the field of civil law—an ambiguity that tends to weaken the Declaration—could be clarified if not entirely removed. Redundancies in ideas and wording, such as the subject of the Ghana proposal—which my delegation supports—could be eliminated.

33. However, those imperfections cannot outweigh or seriously detract from the historic achievement of

adopting at long last a Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. This achievement, which marks another milestone in the two decades of unremitting work which the United Nations has devoted to this important cause, is all the more commendable when viewed in the context of the differing ideologies, political institutions and social systems from which it has emerged. The drafting of the Declaration and its unanimous adoption by the Third Committee is, by any standard, a formidable achievement.

34. The Commission on the Status of Women, which produced the original draft Declaration, deserves a large share of credit and commendation for this notable achievement. A vote of appreciation is also due to Member States which have serious difficulties in this field, but whose sincere co-operation made it possible for the Committee to adopt the Declaration unanimously.

35. The adoption of this Declaration would undoubtedly enhance the significance of the observance next year of International Human Rights Year, which we would all like to be a meaningful one. The work of the United Nations in the field of human rights is second to none of its other activities in importance. The promotion of fundamental human rights touches the very heart of the Charter, for in its most profound sense it is the respect for human dignity and for the inalienable rights of Man that lends nobility to the striving for world peace and all the other great goals of the United Nations.

36. The fact that progress in the promotion of fundamental human rights and freedoms is being achieved in the shadow of mortal danger, under the threat of an armaments race in ultimate weapons which confronts mankind with the possibility of annihilation, adds dimension to the achievement and justifies the hope that man may after all prevail over the menace of brute power that hangs like an upraised sword over the world today.

37. Significant as it is, however, the adoption of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women completes only part of the task that has to be done in this field. The adoption of the Declaration will present to Governments several tests of sincerity. The first is how speedily they will move to adjust discriminatory laws and regulations to conform with the provisions of the Declaration. The second will be the amount of effort and resources they will devote to the economic, cultural and social upliftment of women, on a basis of equality with men, over which so much justified concern was expressed in the Committee. The third will be the effective measures they will take to disseminate the Declaration among their own peoples with a view to generating maximum popular support for the extensive and profound social changes which the Declaration envisages.

38. We can never really complete our work on declarations and conventions on human rights within the limits of the United Nations, in the sense that the task of follow-up, fulfilment and implementation lies mainly in the hands of Governments and of informed, alert and assertive populations. It is for that reason that my delegation attaches particular importance to article 11 of the draft Declaration which urges governmental and non-governmental organizations and indi-

viduals to do all in their power to promote the implementation of the principles contained in this declaration.

39. Mr. SHAHI (Pakistan): The delegation of Pakistan warmly welcomes the adoption of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112] by the Third Committee during the present session. It is indeed gratifying that the Third Committee gave that item the highest priority and that the Assembly should acknowledge its importance by considering it at such an early stage in its deliberations.

40. My delegation believes that we have an outstanding draft for the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. We endorse the proclamation made in article 1 that discrimination against women is fundamentally unjust and constitutes an offence against human dignity. It is one of the fundamental principles of the Constitution of Pakistan that no discrimination of any kind should be made on grounds of caste, creed, sex or religion. The emancipation of women is not a recent phenomenon in my country as, indeed, this process commenced for us many centuries ago and continues unabated. Therefore, article 1 is an affirmation, in our view, of a basic principle of the ideology of Pakistan.

41. We also support articles 2, 3 and 4 providing for legal and educational measures in order to eliminate any discrimination which might exist against women in some countries. In our view, the contents of article 5, namely, that women shall have the same right as men to acquire, change or retain their nationality and that marriage to an alien should not automatically affect the nationality of the wife are based on a humane principle. We hope and expect that Member States will undertake the necessary measures to make this right effective. We subscribe to the view that the rights in the field of civil law guaranteed to women in article 6 should be accorded all over the world. It is heartening to note, however, that this article begins with the expression: "Without prejudice to the safeguarding of the unity and the harmony of the family, which remains the basic unit of any society." We believe that this provision should not be lost sight of while we are discussing the elimination of discrimination against women. We are happy to note that such a clause has been inserted in article 6 by the Third Committee.

42. My delegation is still not convinced about the necessity of retaining articles 7 and 8 in the declaration, for the contents of article 7, in our view, are covered by the other articles and the provision of article 8 does not seem to be within the scope of the declaration. However, we recognize the majority decision of the Committee that those articles should be maintained. As for the remaining articles, my delegation fully supports them.

43. As I have said before, and I repeat, the draft Declaration before us is basically a good document. It is true that it does not go far enough for those countries which already provide an even greater degree of freedom to women, but it is also equally true that for a greater number of countries the document perhaps goes quite far. It is therefore a compromise which should deserve the support of all of us. We

would therefore urge the Assembly to adopt the Declaration without any dissenting vote.

44. Since we are dealing with human rights bearing on the issue of human freedom, it is an opportune occasion for me to refer to a historic phenomenon that is in our minds today. On the fiftieth anniversary of the great revolution which is being fittingly celebrated in the Soviet Union the Pakistan delegation takes pleasure in offering our sincere congratulations to the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the manifold achievements of its great country and people during the past five decades. The fact that Pakistan has a different social system and pursues a different ideology does not detract from our appreciation of the momentous nature of the Revolution of 1917 and of the vital elements which it contained as well as the liberating energies which it released for the whole world.

45. The role of the Soviet Union in the Second World War and the struggle against the inhuman forces of fascism have been fittingly acknowledged by the whole world. The terrible sacrifices, human and material, that the Soviet people suffered, the heroism and steadfastness that they demonstrated will always evoke the admiration of peoples who struggle for freedom. We in Pakistan are particularly conscious of the message of the peoples' right to self-determination given by the Decree on Peace adopted by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on 8 November 1917 in pursuance of Lenin's advocacy, while the First World War was still raging, of the principle of peace without annexations and indemnities based on the peoples' right to self-determination. This was being done at the same time as President Wilson was warning his allies that "self-determination is an imperative principle of action which henceforth statesmen will ignore at their own peril".

46. The historic document, namely, the Decree on Peace defined as annexation and seizure of foreign lands:

"every incorporation of a small or weak nation into a large or powerful state without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time when such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to the given state, or forcibly retained within its borders, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant overseas countries."^{1/}

47. In view of the international issues which have impinged on Pakistan and which agitate the world today, we cannot but enthusiastically applaud this historic declaration and hope that the United Nations will not foresake the principle, which is also firmly embodied in its own Charter.

48. Mr. VRATUŠA (Yugoslavia): Mr. President, before speaking about the importance which my delegation attaches to the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112], I wish, with your

^{1/} V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 26 (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1964), p. 250.

permission, to avail myself of this opportunity to extend, on behalf of the Yugoslav delegation, our most cordial congratulations to the Government and people of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of those of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republics on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution.

49. The October Revolution has marked the beginning of a new era in the progress of mankind, the building up of socialist relations, in this way paving the way to a more progressive and a more human society by greatly contributing to the evolution of a society in the direction of a full affirmation of human personality.

50. Implementing the ideas of October, the great people of the first State of socialism in the world have attained in a historically relatively short period magnificent achievements in the field of industry, science and culture, as well as in that of new social relations. The ideas of October have substantially influenced the promotion of international relations as well towards fuller and fuller assertion of the principles of self-determination and equality of all peoples and States, irrespective of differences in social systems.

51. As a matter of fact, the young socialist State during the very first days of its existence had already proclaimed the well known Lenin's Decree on Peace, which has remained a permanent, essential and inspiring contribution to world peace. Guided by the same ideas of socialism and peaceful international co-operation, the peoples of Yugoslavia established, through their National Liberation War, a pluri-national socialist community of equal nations and have found in its system of self-management their own form to express their aspirations and a guidance to material, social and cultural progress in the country. These are the reasons why the peoples of Yugoslavia are celebrating the anniversary of the Great October Revolution as their own.

52. The General Assembly in its fruitful work on the elaboration and codification of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will, by adopting the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, give us another important document which will no doubt play a significant role in achieving the full equality of women. The contribution made by the Yugoslav delegation in the drafting and, finally, in its adoption reflects our deep conviction that every form of discrimination is incompatible with the dignity of the human person.

53. Contemporary relations, which are experiencing most dynamic changes and which are rapidly spreading from one part of the world to another, imply the full and active participation of all citizens in the political, economic and cultural life of their country. Equality of men and women has become a "must" for the full progress of mankind. However, by adopting the Declaration, whose noble aims we fully support, we shall have made a first step only. The main task still lies ahead, and this does not only rest with the Governments since it is the responsibility of all of us. It is equally important that material conditions be created for the elimination of discrimination against women in practice.

54. As a first step, the provisions of this Declaration should be conveyed to the most remote areas of each country in order to make them accessible to all social strata of people. This, in our view, is the way to place all the people of goodwill in a position to contribute to the implementation of the principles contained in the Declaration which we are going to adopt today.

55. Mr. SANCHEZ GAVITO (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Twenty-two countries of the Americas have today honoured Mexico by authorizing me to speak on their behalf at this meeting of the General Assembly, which has been convened to adopt the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women contained in the report of the Third Committee [A/6880, para. 112]. I interpret this display of confidence in me, for which I am most grateful, as an acknowledgement of the contribution made by the women of Mexico, exemplified by my very good friend Miss María Lavalle Urbina, to the document which, like the practical and important achievement it is, today provides the note of optimism so badly needed at the current session. What is more, these twenty-two delegations chose Mexico as their spokesman knowing full well that it would be I, a member of a generation about to be superseded, who would voice the thoughts of all of us. Herein undoubtedly lies the eloquence of this Latin American gesture and the significance of the tribute which the men of Latin America are today paying to womanhood.

56. We endorse the Declaration unanimously and enthusiastically, despite the fact that our every action, throughout our lives, reflected our belief that denying women equality—for instance, by keeping them aloof from the civic strife which has rent our part of the world in our times—was the best way of showing them affection and devotion.

57. I am well aware that we are being severely judged for this, and that our harshest critics include the younger generation in our American homeland. I would urge the members of that generation to bear in mind that it fell to our lot to accept this change of course, which is now a truly irreversible process. In other words, as soon as we recognized that what we considered best for women was not so, as soon as we realized that without even consulting us the women of Latin America had achieved a destiny different from that which we believed we had prescribed for them—through boundless vanity, if you will, but yet with all the devotion of which we were capable—we gladly co-operated in the tasks of committing to writing, with every formality, as we are doing today, the emancipation they had already won in practice.

58. Our best witnesses are the talented and dedicated women—hailing, of course, from other countries, all of them the product of experiences totally different from our own—who, today are successfully completing a task of many years. The Chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women, Mrs. Sipilä, the Chairman of the Third Committee of the General Assembly, Mrs. Radić, and all the other distinguished women who have so eminently served the cause on which we are today setting our seal, can confirm that the Latin American men of my generation have never stinted their support. In the current struggle against discrimination, whether

on grounds of sex, of race or of religion, we have not allowed and shall not allow anyone to outdo us. This is our way of making clear our faith in the generation which is superseding ours, while at the same time expressing as convincingly as we can our love for womanhood.

59. Mr. MALECELA (United Republic of Tanzania): While participating in the general debate on this subject in the Third Committee [1470th meeting], my delegation had observed that, subject to some reservations, we fully supported the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112].

60. Tanzania, having only a short while ago defeated the aggressive forces of colonialism, cannot but naturally and in principle stand squarely against all forms of discrimination. It is an undeniable fact that discrimination against women has in general been a result of the non-progressive outlook of those forces which would not keep pace with the historical development of society—the forces of exploitation. The acquisition of political independence in many areas of the world and the emancipation of the people have therefore now provided the international community with the opportunity to eradicate discrimination against women. It is our considered view that in order to develop, society must utilize all its natural human resources; and, above all, society must first correct the social wrongs.

61. While my delegation in general supports the principles contained in the Declaration, we feel it imperative to make a few remarks in respect of some of its contents.

62. In article 2, the Declaration calls for measures to be taken to ensure the abolition, *inter alia*, of customs. It is my delegation's view that customs, as a reflection of a people's culture, cannot by a stroke of the pen be abolished. We would not deny that there exist in many areas of the world customs which are by nature discriminatory to women. But, being customs, only the orientation of the masses of the people towards a progressive outlook that accepts the inalienable equality of all human beings can eradicate such social wrong. Again, my delegation fully subscribes to the principle contained in article 8 of the Declaration. Traffic in women and the exploitation of women through prostitution is certainly one of the most despicable and condemnable aspects of the social tragedy. We could not, however, subscribe to the contention that such a state of affairs arises from discriminatory causes. The causes are, in general, socio-economic, and should be faced squarely as such.

63. It is our opinion that, despite its shortcomings, the Declaration stands as an important achievement in our mutual efforts to advance the development and welfare of humanity as a whole. It is our hope that this declaration, which contains international principles, will form an incentive for the drawing up and adoption of, and accession to, a convention that would ensure the implementation of measures to successfully eliminate discrimination against women.

64. Finally, I should like to add that we invite all Member States of this Organization to see to it that when such measures are adopted by the United

Nations they are implemented. Otherwise, good as a document may be, so long as it remains only on paper it will never serve the cause of humanity.

65. Again I should like to say that it is perhaps a very happy coincidence that the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should have been adopted today, at a time when the people in the Soviet Union are celebrating the anniversary of their shaking off the forces of oppression and exploitation.

66. In the preface to his book Ten Days that Shook the World, the eminent writer and historian John Reed wrote:

"No matter what one thinks of Bolshevism, it is undeniable that the Russian Revolution is one of the great events of human history, and the rise of the Bolsheviki a phenomenon of world-wide importance." 2/

On behalf, therefore, of the delegations of Kenya, the Republic of Uganda, the Republic of Zambia, and the United Republic of Tanzania; may I be allowed to express our fraternal greetings to the great Soviet people on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of that revolution.

67. The October Socialist revolution, which was carried to victory under the leadership of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, remains one of the greatest milestones in recorded human history. The suffering and exploitation of millions of human beings in Czarist Russia was a notorious example of the system of feudalism, exploitation and imperialism. Though crushed by the October Revolution in Russia, such exploitation still exists in many parts of the world today.

68. Coming as we do from Africa, my delegation cannot but recall with indignation the humiliation suffered by our continent and people through colonial exploitation. The aggression by the colonialist forces in Africa resulted, as is still very much the case in many areas of Africa today, in the dispossession of the African people of their means of production and, consequently, their relegation to the state of slavery.

69. To many Africans, and indeed to the freedom-loving and peace-loving peoples of the world, such a situation cannot be allowed to continue. The subjugation of people to exploitation, economic and political, is not merely wrong but it is against the best interests of humanity. The exploitation of man by man, the reactionary and negative dictatorship of the miserable minorities, run counter to the laws governing the progressive history of society.

70. The October Socialist Revolution, therefore, by breaking the yoke of capitalistic exploitation, of feudalism, and setting up the first State of workers and peasants, the majority of the people, marked the beginning of the revolution of the exploited masses of the people the world over. As such, it was and has remained an inspiration that has fired the working people everywhere in the world in their struggle to eliminate colonialism and imperialism. In the October

Socialist Revolution, the great Soviet people displayed pioneering revolutionary initiative. They embarked on a path which had not been traversed before and turned mankind's age-old dreams for the elimination of exploitation of man by man into a living reality. Not only that, but the October Socialist Revolution has turned what was an under-developed country and backward land into one of the most powerful nations in the world, with all kinds of advancement in all fields.

71. Let me, therefore, once again, on behalf of the delegations of Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and the United Republic of Tanzania, express the fraternal greetings of our people to the Soviet people as they are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution. It is our hope that the great Soviet people will meet, in the spirit of that historic Revolution, with bigger and better victories and advance to the ultimate victory set out as the goal of that Revolution.

72. Finally, coming from Africa, I cannot but appeal to the people of the Soviet Union with the hope that they will continue to help the struggling people of Africa against colonialism and imperialism.

73. Mrs. MERCHANT (Canada): The Canadian delegation is happy to welcome the adoption by the United Nations of the Declaration barring discrimination against women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112]. This action by the United Nations will be an important milestone in the long process of upholding the rights of women. And another important guarantor, as far as Canada is concerned, of women's rights, as well as those of men, is the institution of parliament, which watches over those who control power and protects the rights of all citizens.

74. It is a strange coincidence that only yesterday the House of Commons of Canada marked a milestone in parliamentary history: the 100 anniversary of the meeting of the first Canadian Parliament on 6 November 1867. In associating the Canadian delegation with the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet Union, Canadians would wish to pay tribute to those contributions which have emerged from the Soviet Union in the past fifty years that are contributions to peaceful living throughout the world. Our thoughts naturally turn to the great performers of music of the Soviet Union, to their orchestras, to their incomparable ballet, to their theatre and to their poets and writers. These have brought joy and pleasure not only to their own people, but to all people throughout the world. We also think of the contributions which have emerged from the Soviet Union in the realm of science and technology. These creative achievements merit the highest recognition here, for they are important contributions to international co-operation and understanding for which the United Nations was created.

75. When we Canadians planned the celebration of our own 100th anniversary, we chose as the theme of the International Exhibition in Montreal "Man and his World" in order to emphasize the essential need to recognize that we are all of one family, all sharing the fruits of creative achievement as well as the pains of human strife. We also recognized that Canada, in celebrating our centenary, does so as a member of the international community to whom we owe so much,

2/ John Reed, Ten Days That Shook the World (New York, International Publishers, 1926), p. xli.

both for what we have achieved and for what we hope to achieve in the future. It is in this spirit that countries like the USSR and Canada, together with many other countries from all over the world, were able to co-operate so successfully at EXPO 67 in a great and inspiring tribute to "Man and his World". As the Prime Minister of Canada said:

"Canada does not celebrate its good fortune alone, but as a member of the international community, we welcome the people of every land to come and join us in our Anniversary."

76. Likewise, in all the celebrations throughout Canada, we stressed the arts of peaceful living, music, the theatre, poetry, as well as the adornment of our natural environment through architecture, engineering, technology and science; for we recognize that the true gauge of human achievement is the advance in creative and peaceful living. And so, whether it be in the matter of discrimination against women or observance of important anniversaries, the gauge of human achievement must surely be progress toward creative and peaceful living. This above all must be the message which goes out from the United Nations, for it is in accordance with the high aspirations embodied in the Charter.

77. Mr. RIFA'I (Jordan): The draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880, and Corr.1, para. 112], which was supported by the Jordanian delegation in the Third Committee and which is submitted for adoption by the General Assembly, is a further step in the progress of humanity towards the fulfilment of its ambitions for human equality in all rights and privileges. Non-discrimination against men and women is a fundamental principle in the culture and ethics of my people and it is an essential requirement for the perfection of the world in which we live at present.

78. Whilst speaking on this pleasant occasion, on which the Assembly will move to adopt this important draft Declaration, I feel privileged to offer on behalf of the delegations of the sister States of Lebanon, Libya and Saudi Arabia and in the name of my country and delegation my warmest congratulations to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to all socialist countries and to their leaders and their representatives at the United Nations on the fiftieth anniversary of the great Bolshevik Revolution. That anniversary coincides with an era of daring challenges that put on the socialist countries additional tasks in the service of international co-operation and world peace. The great achievements of the socialist republics in every field have gained world recognition. In our part of the world we have witnessed with admiration the remarkable achievements which have spread so widely as to provide dignity and welfare for man, so successfully as to equip him with scientific means to bring the conquest of outer space within his reach.

79. Here in the United Nations I feel duty bound to acknowledge with gratitude the honourable stand which the socialist countries have taken consistently in support of every position in which the principles of right and justice have been involved. On this great occasion, I should like to convey from this podium to the peoples of the Soviet Union and all the socialist

republics our best and sincere wishes for their continued progress.

80. Mr. VINCI (Italy): The Italian delegation attaches particular importance to the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112]. In its opinion, indeed, the declaration is not a mere reaffirmation of principles already proclaimed in the Charter and in other international instruments, but it is the moral commitment of all States to take the necessary measures to eliminate existing discrimination against women in law or in fact. In that firm conviction, the Italian delegation has participated in the consideration of the draft Declaration on the status of women and it was glad to note that the draft submitted to the Third Committee was improved rather than weakened.

81. The Italian delegation will vote in favour of the declaration, as it has done in the Committee, both because a Government bill providing for a substantial improvement in its family law is being examined by the Italian Parliament and because we believe that the declaration is not intended to reflect the present situation of women's rights in all Member States; on the contrary, it has to look to the future and has to stress the necessity for making the maximum possible use of the potentialities of women within society.

82. The Italian delegation also appreciates the fact that the draft Declaration embodies the concept of the safeguarding of family unity, which is a basic principle of Italian legislation and of its concept of family life. We would perhaps have preferred to have had those principles referred to in the rights of women also in the field of family law, instead of only in the field of civil law today. However, we believe that small imperfection in the Declaration does not diminish the value of the Declaration as a whole, which from now on will become a reference for all countries, both developing and developed, for an even broader and more harmonious participation by women in all sectors of national life.

83. I now ask the permission of the President to associate my delegation with the remarks of other delegations who have spoken about the fiftieth anniversary of the Revolution which brought about the modern Russian State, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an event which has its place in history. It has in fact introduced into Europe a new political, social and economic system from which our own differs, but that has not prevented our countries from developing their relations and co-operation in many fields. A new nation has emerged through many toils from the Soviet Revolution which, at the same time proud of its past and present history, in its strivings to create new and better conditions of life for its people has certainly become a major factor in the maintenance of peace and security in the world.

84. Therefore, I extend the cordial congratulations of my delegation to the delegation of the Soviet Union on this happy occasion for its country and best wishes for a peaceful and bright future for all its people.

85. May I also take this opportunity to address our warmest congratulations to our Canadian friends on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the first Canadian parliament, as well as on their centennial.

The many similarities in the history of Canada and Italy in the development and strengthening of our democratic institutions and in the traditional friendly links existing between our two countries all constitute reasons for sincere rejoicing by the Italian delegation.

86. Italy was proud and happy to take part in EXPO 67 with a pavilion of its own. The theme "Man and his World" was perfectly in keeping—as was rightly remarked a short while ago by the representative of Canada—with the highest aspirations of mankind embodied in the Charter. My country was especially glad that the President of the Italian Republic, the Honourable Giuseppe Saragat, visited Canada and EXPO 67 on what was such a happy historical event for our Canadian friends.

87. Mr. BARREIRO MAURENZA (Spain) (translated from Spanish): The Spanish delegation wishes to state its exact position in connexion with the vote it will cast on the important draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880, para. 112], which the Third Committee submits to the General Assembly for its consideration.

88. We believe that the draft Declaration is progressive and well suited to current conditions in our society, being generally satisfactory to us and consistent with the principles underlying our own legislation. Nevertheless, we must point out that, in our view, it suffers in places from a certain technical inflexibility, in not distinguishing between married and unmarried women as regards some of the rights mentioned in article 6 of the draft. I would, of course, stress that this observation derives not from any desire to impose restrictions on married women, but from the inescapable fact that they are members of a family.

89. For instance, when article 6, paragraph 2 (b), states simply that women shall have equal rights with men during marriage, that statement can hardly be reconciled with the fact that community of property in marriage, which often exists in various forms, requires a single administrator. The same is true of the exercise of parental authority referred to in paragraph 2 (c), since neither of these sub-paragraphs is covered by the safeguarding of family unity laid down in article 2, paragraph 1, as decided by the Third Committee itself when it agreed to the amendment introducing that paragraph.

90. Nevertheless, the contradiction between some parts of this article and the realities of family life is so obvious that we are sure it will be overcome by means of a correct, common-sense interpretation. This reservation is intended to encourage such an interpretation, and it will not prevent us from voting in favour of the Declaration as it stands.

91. Mr. ALARCON de QUESADA (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): My delegation welcomes the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women contained in the report of the Third Committee to the General Assembly [A/6880, para. 112] and, since it considers it to be of the highest importance, as I explained in the Committee, we will give it its full support in the Assembly.

92. Today marks the fiftieth anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution. Half a century ago the

Russian people, its workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals, led by its seasoned Bolshevik vanguard, overthrew the feudal fortress of tsarism and imperialist oppression.

93. That revolutionary triumph was achieved in very difficult circumstances, amid the hostility and opposition of reactionary forces throughout the world. None the less, the Russian people, guided by the thought and the actions of Lenin and his comrades, gained the victory and put into effect for the first time on earth the principles of socialism.

94. The example of the October Revolution spread beyond the frontiers of Russia and has been a stimulus to the oppressed masses throughout the world in their struggle for independence, freedom and socialism.

95. In recalling the never-to-be-forgotten fighters of the Smolny Palace, the heroic stormers of the Winter Palace, the valiant men of the cruiser *Aurora*, my delegation hails the Russian people and all the Soviet peoples as they commemorate this supreme date in their history, which is also part of the heritage of all the peoples of the world.

96. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq): My delegation will vote in favour of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112]. Although we have had certain reservations concerning some of its articles, we are in a position to vote for it in its entirety, and our delegation has made our position clear in the Third Committee.

97. There can be no doubt that one of the most characteristic features of modernization and progress in any society is the position that women occupy in that society. It is therefore fitting that the United Nations, from its inception, should have taken such an interest and played such an active role in the advancement of women and the protection of their rights. This draft Declaration is indeed a great landmark in the progress of the Organization in the field of human rights.

98. It gives me particular pleasure today to extend our sincere congratulations to the Soviet people and their Government on this historic date. The great October Revolution takes its place among the few events that have shaped the history of mankind. The world in which we live today would have been different had that Revolution not taken place. The establishment of socialism in a great country like the Soviet Union has had a profound effect on the history of our era.

99. All the great ideas and developments of our time—such as economic development, the emergence of scores of peoples to national independence and freedom, the great scientific and technological revolution, the eternal quest for peace and disarmament, the advancement of the cause of human rights—have found some of their mainsprings in the events of that great day fifty years ago.

100. But the tribute which we pay is primarily and foremost due to the people of the Soviet Union who, by their toil, their effort and their sacrifice, have built the imposing structure that we find today, a structure which they have imbued with their own particular genius. Their magnificent defence of their homeland during the Second World War shall

forever stand out as one of the greatest epics of heroism and human endurance that mankind has witnessed in its long and troubled march. And of course, in recent years, the breathtaking achievements of the Soviet Union in the field of outer space and technology have evoked the admiration of peoples everywhere.

101. To us, the Arab peoples, it is a source of particular pleasure that our relations with the great Soviet people over the last few years have become more friendly and have expanded in all fields; and I can say now that this friendship is one of the bases of our foreign policy.

102. It is for this reason that our people will not forget the honourable stand that the Soviet Government has taken in respect of the aggression unleashed on our people last summer. That stand has evoked the gratitude and admiration of the Arab people everywhere. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to express our good wishes for the Soviet Union during the next fifty years of its life.

103. Mr. PARTHASARATHI (India): The adoption by the Third Committee of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112] is, so far, the most important step taken by the United Nations in this field of work. The adoption by the General Assembly of this Declaration will truly constitute a landmark in the field of Human Rights in general and in the struggle for attaining equality for women, in particular. In India, women have played a very important role in the struggle for our independence. Scores and hundreds of our women made the supreme sacrifice in our struggle for freedom. Not only is my Government, therefore, fully conscious of the importance of the contribution of the United Nations in this struggle, but wishes also to underline that the world cannot either be peaceful or prosperous, if we cannot have this half of our world putting its shoulders to the wheel with a view to attaining social and economic progress.

104. We have voted in favour of the Declaration in the Committee, and will do so, once again, here. While commending this Declaration for adoption by the General Assembly, I should like to emphasize that the Declaration, as it has come to us in the plenary, is one composite whole and must be viewed as such.

105. While I have the floor, may I make a reference to a significant event in world history of seminal value which took place fifty years ago?

106. I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my delegation, to felicitate the Government and people of the Soviet Union on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution. In a message of greetings the Prime Minister of India said:

"The October Revolution signalled the start of a great experiment in remoulding man and remaking society. The October Revolution is a crucial event of human history. It signalled the triumph of an idea and the start of a great experiment in remoulding man and remaking society. In the last fifty years the achievements of the Soviet people have been considerable and have won the world's admiration. The Soviet people have withstood tremendous chal-

lenges and have saved the world from the dark forces of Nazism at an unbelievable cost. Today they are in the forefront in many fields of activity. They are partisans of peace and of international co-operation. They have stretched out a hand of friendship to developing nations. On the occasion of the golden jubilee of the revolution I recall the dreams of Lenin which the people of the Soviet Union have so largely fulfilled."

107. The birth and development of socialism in the Soviet Union and in other socialist countries has been a major determining factor in shaping the course of the history of our age. The socialist system, as developed by those countries, has become a reality in the world order of today. It is perhaps no accident that this year, which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution, you, Sir, a representative of a socialist State, have been elected for the first time to preside over the deliberations of this august Assembly.

108. I cannot let this occasion pass without making a brief reference to the most cordial relations which so happily subsist between my Government and that of the Soviet Union. While our struggle for independence was being waged, the Soviet Government extended its support for our cause. Immediately after attaining freedom, the Soviet Union was among the very first countries with which India established diplomatic relations. Almost two decades before the attainment of our independence, Jawaharlal Nehru was already thinking of what the character of the relations between our two countries was to be. Following a visit to the Soviet Union in 1927 he observed, with his characteristic foresight, that Russia being a great neighbour, it was essential for India "to know her and understand her and shape our policy accordingly".

109. It is a matter of deep satisfaction that after we had attained independence, the relations between our two peoples and Governments developed steadily along the lines of friendship and co-operation. For our part, we did so consciously in the knowledge that the Soviet Union was not only a great Power, but also an Asian Power. The Soviet Union has a large part of its territory in Asia and it was but natural that both neighbouring countries strove to develop friendly ties and a common interest. We were also convinced that the development of such relations would not only be compatible with but would even further the objectives of the policy of non-alignment we had elected to adopt. Our ties are based on the principles of mutual regard and benefit and have expressed themselves through co-operative action in the cause of international peace and peaceful coexistence. The relations that have developed between our two Governments in the last two decades of our independence have been a striking example not only of peaceful coexistence between States, with differing social systems, but also of the concept of friendly relations based on non-interference and mutual respect envisaged under the Charter of the United Nations.

110. The tremendous achievements of the Soviet Union in the fields of industrial development, science and technology and the conquest of space need no explanation or advertisement. They represent the finest example of what a people can achieve by their own efforts. These achievements are particularly

significant to us in the United Nations, where we are constantly endeavouring to solve the problems of development and the bridging of the gap between the rich and the poor. The efforts made by the Soviet Union to further the development of the developing countries have contributed in no small measure to the goals we seek to achieve.

111. The role of the Soviet Union in promoting the objectives and purposes of the world Organization are too well known to require reiteration. In the maintenance of international peace and security, in the quest for disarmament, in the struggle against colonialism, and in supporting the economic independence of developing countries, the Soviet Union has made a significant contribution.

112. In concluding I should like to wish the Soviet Government and people greater prosperity and success in their efforts to bring about a world order in which a secure peace and more meaningful international co-operation become the tangible realities the Charter of the world Organization had envisaged. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution today, I recall Jawaharlal Nehru's statement that Lenin had the genius to march step by step with history. It is perhaps under the inspiration and guidance provided by Lenin that the Soviet Union and the socialist system have emerged as a political reality and a fundamental factor in international relations. We feel assured that the wisdom and maturity which enabled that achievement will be reflected in the future efforts of the Soviet Union to bring about a lasting and stable peace, which will be the greatest possible contribution to the future course of world history.

113. May I also refer to another important anniversary, which we are celebrating this year. In 1967, Canada completed its first 100 years of nationhood. The building up of that large, beautiful and rich country by a brave and industrious people has really been one of the great success stories of our times. That we have bonds of intimate friendship with them within the Commonwealth of Nations is something from which we in India derive a great deal of satisfaction. We rejoice with the people of Canada in this their year of centenary celebrations and we take this opportunity to offer our warmest congratulations to the Canadian delegation.

114. May I quote from the messages of my President and my Prime Minister to the Government and the people of Canada on this occasion? The President of India said:

"On the completion today of one hundred years of Canada's nationhood which you are celebrating this centennial year, it gives me great pleasure to convey to you, on behalf of the Government and the people of India and on my own behalf, our warmest greetings and congratulations."

The Prime Minister of India said:

"We rejoice with you and your people on the occasion of your centenary celebrations... We have the highest regard for Canada and for the support for the values and great causes of peace has been noteworthy. She has set a fine example of racial tolerance."

115. Mr. BOUATTOURA (Algeria) (translated from French): My delegation is very pleased at the adoption of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880, para. 112]. It is very encouraging to note that the Third Committee gave this draft and its adoption priority on its agenda. In this Declaration, the United Nations confirms the egalitarian principles of the Charter. During the discussion my delegation was unable to support certain amendments either because they were restrictive or because they conflicted with Algerian positive law or with the essence of Moslem law. My delegation is ready now, as it was in the Third Committee, to give the Declaration itself its full approval.

116. This solemn occasion gives my delegation a timely and pleasant opportunity to congratulate the Soviet delegation, and through it the great peoples of the USSR, whose scientific and economic achievements have today kindled the imagination of mankind. At this difficult moment in world history, which has its repercussions here in our Organization, the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution must constitute a gleam of hope, for it is a fortunate reminder that, whatever the problems we have to face, the future will ultimately depend on what mankind makes of it.

117. If there is an appropriate lesson to be learned from this—and we seize upon it because it is both encouraging and optimistic—it is that movements like the October Revolution germinate, are born, and flourish through the will of those who are guided by a faith in a better future. It is they who create history at the expense of those who rest content with the tedious comforts of the present.

118. If we are to ascribe to the October Revolution its full historical significance, we must first admit that it sanctioned a new order of things. The former course of history, marked by the economic domination of the strongest elements and the reduction of men to various forms of slavery, was overturned by the transfer of power to the least-privileged elements and by the sharp awareness which it gave them of their right to revolt against injustice and to found this new order. History shows, and will continue to show, to what extent the whole evolution of societies as we know them today is indebted to the October Revolution.

119. The inheritor, to some extent, of the French Revolution and of the Paris Commune, it has greatly influenced the political orientation of the many nations and régimes which were born of it. Like the revolutions which preceded it in Europe or America, the Red October had a universal message to communicate. This message, launched one hundred years ago and received fifty years ago, has today become the Charter of those in Asia, Africa and Latin America who want to be no longer the objects but the subjects of history. This gathering together, this mobilization, was made possible by the institution of the Soviets, whose impact on international relations was revealed in the establishment of this new order in perpetual movement. This movement and this order are the very hall-mark of the illustrious event which we celebrate today and which was able to restore to the concept of socialism an interpretation and an application both

original and creative. The vehement struggles taking place in all the countries of the Third World bear this hall-mark, this stamp which, we must acknowledge, is derived from the October Revolution.

120. Continuous and permanent, this Revolution rejects the status quo. To accept the status quo would be to submit to a veritable death sentence, for the history of mankind is the same as the movement of the planets, with which it seems to be in secret harmony. To seek to halt the course of history is to deny the obvious truth that mankind is naturally evolving.

121. The very notion of democracy, so ancient and so widely accepted (except for a few retrograde States), from this point of view takes on a new significance, and gives a universal orientation to the destiny of millions of human beings. The extreme diversity of historical situations in no way detracts from the doctrinal foundation of the October Revolution. We would remind those who would like to regard it as a system of fixed ideas, a sort of religion which ignores social and intellectual change, that all the great political ideas underlying decolonization throughout the world owe a great part of their scope and their significance to it. This is why the present international situation, which is characterized by an equilibrium that is fatal to the countries of the Third World, can only be understood in the light of the lessons to be learned from the October Revolution. These lessons emphasize that the only way open to those who refuse to accept the deplorable consequences of the status quo lies in an over-all reconsideration of the balance of power which determines the evolution of political events. We have also learnt that we must substitute for the unacceptable argument of resignation a form of determination based upon the rejection of any colonialist interference and any resurgence of neo-colonialism, whatever its form.

122. The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution also means paying a special tribute to the actual character of Lenin, that maker of history, who combined the two essential qualities of the revolutionary, an acute awareness of theoretical problems and a deep and realistic knowledge of the contingencies inherent in any human situation. This intimate combination of reflection and commitment, their interpretation and their joint necessity, was often stressed by this great revolutionary, who rejected nothing of the dialectic of thought and action, regarding both as equally necessary, equally fruitful, and equally significant.

123. We cannot conclude this evocation of the past without saying how much we believe that much, if not all of Lenin's teaching is to be found in the burgeoning of the Algerian revolution. Our revolutionary movement, like those which triumphed recently in China and Cuba, or like that which is today resisting with unparalleled heroism in Viet-Nam, has seen its struggle for national independence take on such dimensions that the proletariat, having now become a nation, has identified itself with the socialist revolution. The initiatives which have led to this result have now become part of a development policy and a search for solutions which correspond to the desire to found and to build a socialist society. In a word, the revolution of 1 November salutes that of the 7th.

124. Mr. BERARD (France) (translated from French): I have particular pleasure in speaking today, as the delegations of the group of Western Powers have asked me to do, on the occasion of the vote on the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. It was indeed our unanimous hope that such an instrument could be adopted by the General Assembly before the beginning of 1968, which will mark the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

125. Although it is not legally binding, the Declaration which we are about to adopt defines the principles which Member States should uphold in order to ensure the elimination of the last vestiges of discrimination against women. The text sums up, as it were, all the work done by the United Nations for the emancipation of women and at the same time lays the foundation for further progress in this field. The delegations of the geographical group which I represent wish to congratulate the Third Committee, which under the chairmanship of Mrs. Mara Radic, has brought this task to a successful conclusion. The Commission on the Status of Women had done excellent preparatory work and the Draft Declaration which it submitted^{3/} successfully stood the test of criticisms and amendments. We should therefore also like to thank the Commission on the Status of Women for the way in which it carried out its mandate. We offer our heartiest congratulations to it, and to its Chairman, Mrs. Sipilä, who defended the Commission's text with great skill and distinction.

126. Speaking now as representative of France, I should like to convey my delegation's warmest greetings to the Soviet delegation on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution. My delegation is fully aware of the importance attached by the Soviet Union, its Government, and its people to the anniversary of those events which, a century after the French Revolution, made so profound an impression on the modern world.

127. France and Russia have different political régimes to which they are both in their own way equally attached. But throughout history their peoples have been brought together by the same friendship that inspires their two Governments today. I should like to assure the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the warm feelings felt by the French delegation today towards his delegation and his country.

128. Mr. BUDO (Albania) (translated from French): Some representatives have taken advantage of this agenda item "Draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women" [A/6880, para. 112] to come to the rostrum to express their good wishes on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the great October Revolution. In the circumstances, my delegation cannot refrain from also expressing the Albanian people's attitude towards this great celebration of the world proletariat.

129. Revolutionaries throughout the world and all progressive peoples are today participating in the jubilee of the great socialist revolution of October,

^{3/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 1, resolution 1206 (XLII), annex.

which opened a new era in the history of human society, marked by the collapse of the capitalist and imperialist system and the triumph of a new social order without oppression and without exploitation of man by man, the era of socialism and communism.

130. While participating enthusiastically and with special solemnity in this celebration of the world proletariat, the Albanian people and their Workers' Party regard with scorn, revulsion and contempt all the hypocritical and demagogical attempts of the Soviet revisionist clique to exploit the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution in order to hide from the Soviet people and from all the peoples of the world their complete betrayal of Leninist-Marxism and the ideals and achievements of the October Revolution, as well as their collusion with the American imperialists, a collusion directed towards the implementation of their joint counter-revolutionary policy of stifling with fire and sword the world movement of the peoples of national and social liberation.

131. The true successors and upholders of the ideals and accomplishments of the October Revolution of the great Lenin and the great Stalin are all those parties and Leninist-Marxist forces throughout the world which are waging a firm and resolute struggle of principle against the treason of the revisionists, which are fighting doggedly in defence of the purity of Leninist-Marxist doctrine and the lessons of the Revolution, and which hold high and carry ever forward the great banner of the October Revolution which the Soviet revisionists have thrown down and contemptuously trampled underfoot.

132. The Albanian people will continue to express their profound confidence in the revolutionary forces of the Soviet Union and their unshakable conviction that the Soviet renegades from Leninist-Marxism will not last long, and that the glorious Soviet people, all the revolutionaries of the Soviet Union, will overthrow and wipe out for ever the renegade Khrushchev clique, restore the glorious traditions of the October Revolution, and ensure that the star of the Soviet Union will shine again as in the time of Lenin and Stalin and once more lead the way towards Leninist-Marxism and communism.

133. As regards the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the delegation of the People's Republic of Albania, while appreciating the spirit of the text as a whole, reserves its position at this point in the debate. Our Government will determine its position after further study and if necessary make the appropriate comments.

134. Mr. REYES (Chile) (translated from Spanish): Chile will vote in favour of the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880, para. 112]. We are glad that it has been approved for it recognizes the dignity of women, acknowledges all their rights and stresses the importance of the family as the basic unit of society. These principles reflect the Chilean concept of womanhood that has been embodied for many years in our laws and our customs.

135. As a symbol of these ideals, we recall a great Chilean woman, the poetess Gabriela Mistral, whose life and work was a song in praise of love, childhood, and the achievement of women's rights.

136. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, Chile would also like to associate itself with the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet revolution. We who have a vision of man, society and the State founded upon the principles of humanism, we who are trying modestly through our Government, according to the concepts of Christian democracy, to bring about speedy and profound changes in economics and social structures in order to ensure that our people achieve justice and freedom, we who are at the same time seeking to contribute to the formation of an international society dedicated to peace and solidarity, cannot forget that today marks the completion of fifty years of a great revolutionary experiment.

137. From our all-embracing viewpoint, we appreciate what the revolution has done to speed the rise of the proletariat, to stimulate scientific and technological creativity, and to help us, through the principle of peaceful coexistence, to confront the modern era.

138. We hope that, as the Revolution evolves, the supreme values of the individual will not be distorted or belittled, that the ties between our two countries will grow stronger and closer, and that the great nation which the Soviet Union is today will fulfil to the utmost the mission of promoting peace among peoples.

139. Mr. DAOUDY (Syrian Arab Republic): My delegation, in the course of the general debate on the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112], had to make some reservations regarding the words "abolish customs" in article 2 of the draft Declaration. The Syrian delegation proposed in the Committee to replace the word "abolish" by the word "modify", but our proposal, unfortunately, was not accepted. We are of the opinion that national customs could have very positive aspects which should be preserved. If, on the other hand, they have any negative aspects, they should, naturally, be modified.

140. With regard to sub-paragraph (a) of article 6, our delegation was able to vote in favour of it in the Committee when it was explained that that sub-paragraph referred to the rights to be given to women to inherit, and not to the alteration of existing legislation regarding this matter.

141. We now come to sub-paragraph (b) of article 6. We wish to confirm what our delegation had to say about this in the Committee [1471st meeting]—that we shall abstain on it. We have adopted this attitude in view of the fact that sub-paragraph (b) of article 6 is contrary to religious legislation existing at present in Syria.

142. Mr. President, with your permission, I wish to say a few words on the great October Revolution, on behalf of the delegations of the Sudan and Syria.

143. The delegations of the Sudan and Syria are happy to join the other delegations in extending to the delegations of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic our heartfelt and sincere congratulations on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the

October Revolution. The peoples of the Soviet Union can take a legitimate pride in what the October Revolution has achieved for their country and in the immense impact it has left all over the world. Indeed, no other event in the modern history of mankind has ever been felt so strongly in every corner of the world as has the October Revolution.

144. It is, therefore, with a sense of this historic turning point that the delegations of the Sudan and Syria wish to convey to the peoples of the Soviet Union and to their Government the admiration of the peoples of the Sudan and Syria and their sincere and fraternal felicitations.

145. We feel, moreover, that the October Revolution has been an instrument of greatness for the Soviet peoples and a source of inspiration for the conquered and struggling peoples. What the October Revolution did in releasing the creative potentialities of the Soviet people in every field of human endeavour does not need to be enumerated, as it is very well known to every one of us. Hardly any day passes without our learning of a new achievement by the Soviet Union. This is by no means limited to the countless exploits achieved by Soviet science and technology on earth: by now it has become an established fact that the honour of pioneering, the realization of the dreams of man in outer space, and the peaceful conquest of that unknown world, goes deservedly to the Soviet Union. What is of no less importance, in our view, is the fact that the October Revolution has set in motion liberation movements everywhere. That Revolution has shown the way towards freedom to the subjugated peoples and has given a boost to their fight for emancipation.

146. Moreover, the adoption by many countries, whose population exceeds one-third of the human race, of political and economic systems inspired by the October Revolution has been a positive contribution to the attainment of independence by emerging nations and was instrumental in allowing them to carry out their programmes for economic development.

147. Furthermore, we are eager to note that this landmark in the history of mankind has been able to create a powerful deterrent to the designs of the imperialist and colonialist Powers. In addition, we are sure that the healthy forces released by the October Revolution will be able to keep the aggressive forces at bay. We are confident that the developing nations, with the assistance of the socialist countries, will emerge victorious from their struggle for their dignity, development and the preservation of their freedom and independence.

148. Finally, the delegations of the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic warmly salute the peoples of the Soviet Socialist Republics and all the socialist countries, wishing them greater success in their endeavour to create a world order based on peace, justice and equality of opportunity for all individuals and nations of the world.

149. Mr. JAKOBSON (Finland): The draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [A/6880 and Corr.1, para. 112], which now is before us, has been under consideration for five years. Throughout this period, Finland through our repre-

sentative on the Commission on the Status of Women, has played an active role in this work, a role that has come naturally to a country in which, I am proud to say, women have enjoyed full equality and actively participated in public life for a longer period and in greater measure than perhaps in most other countries.

150. The Declaration has been repeatedly termed an historical document. In what sense is this claim justified? Certainly, this is the first international instrument designed to spell out in concrete terms what is to be considered discrimination based on sex, though the discrimination as such has already previously been condemned in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as in the international covenants on human rights.

151. With regard to discrimination in such fields as political rights, nationality of married women, access to education and economic opportunities, the Declaration repeats what has been stated before in other legal instruments in the conventions adopted in the respective fields, either by the United Nations or UNESCO or the International Labour Organisation. What really is new in this document is the definition of equality or non-discrimination in the field of private law, where previously only one convention, limited in scope, had been adopted, and in criminal law. In these respects, the Declaration opens the way to the adoption of further conventions in the future, and it is also the first universal legal instrument dealing with the rights and responsibilities of spouses during marriage and at its dissolution.

152. It is only natural, therefore, that article 6 of the Declaration was the article on which agreement was most difficult to reach. In every country family law, more than any other legislation, mirrors the prevailing traditions, customs and religious beliefs. It is the area in which opinions and attitudes are most deeply rooted and therefore most difficult to change. In view of all this, it is all the more remarkable that even this article could be adopted unanimously. The opening phrase of this article, mentioning that the provisions contained in it are to be followed without prejudice to the family unity and harmony reveals the anxieties felt with regard to a definition of the rights and responsibilities of women as spouses.

153. This phrase had not been included in the draft adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women and some misgivings have been expressed that it may be interpreted in a way that would tend to nullify the provisions of this article. It is to be hoped that such misgivings will prove to be unnecessary and that the phrase in question will be understood as a general statement on the interrelationship of the rights and responsibilities of the two spouses.

154. My delegation supports the proposal made by the representative of Ghana concerning the deletion of the second phrase of sub-paragraph 2 (b) of article 6 of the Declaration. After the separate vote has been taken on this, we would hope that the Declaration would be adopted unanimously, and we also hope that it will be given maximum publicity so that its message will reach all those to whom it is addressed: Governments and organizations, as well as individuals. To

this end, the International Year for Human Rights will no doubt provide many opportunities.

155. Now, having concluded my remarks on the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, may I be permitted to address a few words to the delegations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which today celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution. I have the privilege of doing so on behalf of the delegations of the five Nordic countries, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland. In the history of the past fifty years, which have seen such tremendous changes throughout the world, the October Revolution looms large, regardless of the point of view of the observer, as one of the events that have determined the shape of the twentieth century.

156. As the representative of Finland, I could not fail to mention here its immediate impact on my own country. Within a month of the Revolution, Finland declared its independence, which was promptly recognized by Lenin's Government. For the peoples of the Russian empire, the October Revolution meant the

beginning of a profound transformation touching upon every facet of their life. Today, the USSR is one of the most powerful States of the world, a permanent member of the Security Council, a Power whose role in this Organization is of such great importance in any effort to advance the cause of peace and co-operation among nations. The great achievements of the Soviet people in so many fields command our respect and admiration.

157. The Nordic countries and the USSR, although they have different social systems, have developed friendly relations and fruitful co-operation. The Charter tells us all to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours. In the relations between the Nordic countries and the USSR, this Charter prescription has, I believe, been fulfilled. I thus take great pleasure, on behalf of the five Nordic delegations, in extending our sincere congratulations and best wishes to the delegation of the USSR on their great day.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.