

15th meeting

Wednesday, 24 May 1989, at 10.35 a.m.

President: Mr. Kjeld Vilhelm MORTENSEN (Denmark)

E/1989/SR.15

AGENDA ITEM 8

Transnational corporations (E/1989/28 and Add.1, E/1989/87)

REPORT OF THE FIRST (ECONOMIC) COMMITTEE (E/1989/87)

- The PRESIDENT said that the Council had before it the report of its First (Economic) Committee (E/1989/87) on agenda item 8, which had been allocated to the Committee for its consideration. In paragraph 19 of the report, the Committee recommended to the Council the adoption of eight draft resolutions proposed by the Commission on Transnational Corporations in the report on its fifteenth session (E/1989/28, chap. I, sect. A), namely: I, "Activities of the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations related to economic cooperation among developing countries"; II, "Recent trends concerning transnational corporations and international economic relations"; III, "Role of transnational corporations in the least developed countries"; IV, "Code of conduct on transnational corporations"; V, "Transnational corporations and environmental protection in developing countries"; VI, "Contribution of the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990"; VII, "Activities of transnational corporations in South Africa and Namibia"; VIII, "Role of transnational banks in developing countries".
- He invited the Council to take action on draft resolutions I to VIII.

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

- Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that his delegation favoured the adoption by consensus of draft resolution I and remained convinced of the need for technical co-operation between the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations and developing States. Several co-operation projects undertaken by his Government were facing financial obstacles, and he felt certain that the Centre would continue to provide assistance in the search for solutions.

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 1989/21).

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

- Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that he hoped draft resolution II would be adopted by consensus. The recent process of regional economic integration among the developed countries called for new thinking about the potential impact of such integration on the future operations of transnational corporations in developing countries.

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 1989/22).

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

- Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that his delegation favoured the adoption by consensus of draft resolution III. The role of transnational corporations in development was now

recognized, and their responsibility with regard to investments in the least developed countries should be stressed.

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 1989/23).

- Mrs. SYAHRUDDIN (Indonesia) said that she wished to place on record her delegation's support for the three draft resolutions just adopted.

DRAFT RESOLUTION IV

- Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that he hoped draft resolution IV would be adopted by consensus. His delegation was pleased that the members of the Council had repeatedly affirmed their willingness to pursue informal consultations in order to reach a compromise on the issue. Although some questions were still outstanding, such as the applicable law in cases of disputes between transnational corporations and the host State, the general atmosphere was now conducive to finalizing the draft.

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 1989/24).

DRAFT RESOLUTION V

- The PRESIDENT recalled that draft resolution V had been adopted by the First (Economic) Committee, in a roll-call vote, by 34 votes to 1, and drew attention to the statement on programme budget implications contained in document E/1989/28/Add.1.

- Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that his delegation intended to vote for the draft resolution, and reiterated its position on the need for large-scale international co-operation on the issue. While transnational corporations bore a major responsibility for the protection of the environment, that role was also shared by the developing countries, which could benefit from the experience of developed nations. The information to be submitted to the Secretary-General by the Council would be useful in connection with the possible holding of a conference on environment and development in 1992.

A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution V.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

Draft resolution V was adopted by 53 votes to 1 (resolution 1989/25).

- Mr. SHAPOVALOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in explanation of vote, said that it was his understanding that the Secretary-General would

take all necessary steps to cover any expenses connected with the studies provided for in the draft resolution just adopted from the existing budget appropriations. The quest for such resources should not be an obstacle to the implementation of the draft resolution as a whole.

11. Mr. TYSON (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had joined the consensus on draft resolution V before the statement of programme budget implications had been made available. He believed strongly in budgetary discipline and hoped that the work outlined in the draft resolution could be carried out within the current resource levels.

DRAFT RESOLUTION VI

12. Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that he supported the adoption by consensus of draft resolution VI. It was obvious that a new responsibility was incumbent upon investors to promote economic development in the poorest African countries; to do so was, of course, in the interest of all concerned.

Draft resolution VI was adopted (resolution 1989/26).

DRAFT RESOLUTION VII

13. The PRESIDENT noted that the First (Economic) Committee had adopted draft resolution VII, in a roll-call vote, by 43 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

14. Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution. The harm caused by the abhorrent policy of *apartheid* could not be ignored, and it was necessary to condemn those transnational corporations which continued to co-operate with the Pretoria régime. His country looked forward to Namibia's entry into the community of independent nations.

A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution VII.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Poland, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal.

Draft resolution VII was adopted by 45 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions (resolution 1989/27).

15. Mr. HARRISON (United Kingdom), speaking in explanation of vote, said he regretted that it had not been possible for a consensus resolution on the issue to be adopted at the current session. He hoped that such a consensus would be reached in 1990 in the Commission on Transnational Corporations and the Council, particularly with regard to the activities of transnational corporations in Namibia, where the Council should take account of recent developments.

16. Mr. TYSON (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that the people and Government of his country strongly rejected racism and *apartheid*. It was his Government's policy to promote a peaceful transition to non-racial democracy in South Africa through

carefully targeted political, diplomatic and economic pressure. However, comprehensive and punitive sanctions as called for in the draft resolution would not work, and the extreme language of some of the operative paragraphs, about which other delegations had expressed reservations, detracted from the serious efforts undertaken to end *apartheid*. As to Namibia, the draft resolution did not take account of changed circumstances there.

DRAFT RESOLUTION VIII

17. The PRESIDENT recalled that draft resolution VIII had been adopted by the First (Economic) Committee, in a roll-call vote, by 43 votes to 1, with one abstention.

18. Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said he hoped that the report by the Secretary-General at the next session of the Commission on Transnational Corporations would focus on the issue of external debt, in view of the close relationship between the international debt crisis and transnational banks as important sources of capital. His delegation would vote in favour of draft resolution VIII.

A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution VIII.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Canada.

Draft resolution VIII was adopted by 52 votes to 1, with 1 abstention (resolution 1989/28).

19. Mr. TYSON (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that draft resolution VIII was unbalanced and did not sufficiently take account of deliberations in other institutions. It was important to avoid duplication in the formulation of debt-reduction strategies and to allow the Bretton Woods institutions to get on with their work.

20. The PRESIDENT said that the First (Economic) Committee, in paragraph 20 of its report (E/1989/87), recommended a draft decision entitled "Provisional agenda and documentation for the sixteenth session of the Commission on Transnational Corporations" for adoption by the Council.

21. If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision.

The draft decision was adopted (decision 1989/124).

22. The PRESIDENT suggested, if there were no objections, that the Council should take note of the report of the Commission on Transnational Corporations on its fifteenth session (E/1989/28 and Add.1).

It was so decided (decision 1989/125).

23. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 8.

AGENDA ITEM 10

Women (E/1989/27, E/1989/70, E/1989/90 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1):

- (a) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- (b) Advancement of women

REPORT OF THE SECOND (SOCIAL) COMMITTEE
(E/1989/90 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1)

24. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had before it the report of its Second (Social) Committee (E/1989/90 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1) on agenda item 10, which had been allocated to the Committee for its consideration. In paragraph 32 of part I (E/1989/90) of the report, the Committee recommended 16 draft resolutions for adoption by the Council. Draft resolutions I to XIV had been recommended initially by the Commission on the Status of Women in the report on its thirty-third session (E/1989/27, chap. I, sect. A) as draft resolutions I, II and IV to XV.

25. The 16 draft resolutions were entitled: I, "Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat"; II, "Programme planning and activities to advance the status of women"; III, "Women and children in Namibia"; IV, "Preparations for the session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 1990 to review and appraise progress in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women"; V, "Women and children under *apartheid*"; VI, "Situation of Palestinian women"; VII, "Women and peace in Central America"; VIII, "Equality in economic and social participation"; IX, "Measures to facilitate the participation of women in development"; X, "Elderly women"; XI, "Women, human rights and development in Central America"; XII, "Women living in absolute poverty"; XIII, "Women and development"; XIV, "Economic situation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean"; XV, "International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women"; XVI, "Elimination of discrimination against women in accordance with the aims of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women".

26. He invited the Council to take action on draft resolutions I to XVI.

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 1989/29).

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 1989/30).

27. Mrs. HELKE (United Kingdom) said that although her delegation had joined the consensus on draft resolution II, the references to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 would have to be seen in the context of the relevant regulations and rules adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/234, particularly those concerning the identification of priorities and the allocation of resources. Her delegation attached importance to respect for that procedure.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS III AND IV

Draft resolutions III and IV were adopted (resolutions 1989/31 and 1989/32).

DRAFT RESOLUTION V

28. The PRESIDENT recalled that draft resolution V had been adopted by the Second (Social) Committee, in a recorded vote, by 37 votes to 2, with 9 abstentions.

A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution V.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Poland, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal.

Draft resolution V was adopted by 44 votes to 2, with 8 abstentions (resolution 1989/33).

DRAFT RESOLUTION VI

29. The PRESIDENT recalled that the Second (Social) Committee had adopted draft resolution VI, in a recorded vote, by 32 votes to 1, with 14 abstentions.

A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution VI.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Poland, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Zaire.

Draft resolution VI was adopted by 38 votes to 1, with 15 abstentions (resolution 1989/34).

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS VII TO XII

Draft resolutions VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, and XII were adopted (resolutions 1989/35, 1989/36, 1989/37, 1989/38, 1989/39 and 1989/40).

DRAFT RESOLUTION XIII

30. The PRESIDENT recalled that draft resolution XIII had been adopted by the Second (Social) Committee, in a recorded vote, by 32 votes to 1, with 14 abstentions.

A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution XIII.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Poland, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Draft resolution XIII was adopted by 40 votes to 1, with 13 abstentions (resolution 1989/41).

DRAFT RESOLUTION XIV

Draft resolution XVI was adopted (resolution 1989/42).

DRAFT RESOLUTION XV

Draft resolution XV was adopted (resolution 1989/43).

DRAFT RESOLUTION XVI

Draft resolution XVI was adopted (resolution 1989/44).

31. The PRESIDENT said that in paragraph 33 of part I (E/1989/90) of the report of the Second (Social) Committee, the Committee recommended to the Council the adoption of four draft decisions, namely: I, "System-wide co-ordination of activities to advance the status of women and to integrate women into development"; II, "Activities to assist women in the fight against the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome pandemic"; III, "Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-third session and provisional agenda and documentation for the thirty-fourth session of the Commission"; IV, "Interregional consultation on women in public life". Under draft decision I, the Council would decide to defer action on the draft resolution of the same title recommended by the Commission on the Status of Women in its report (E/1989/27, chap. I, sect. A), as draft decision III. Draft decisions II and III were originally recommended by the Commission in its report (*ibid.*, chap. I, sect. B), as draft decisions I and II.

32. He invited the Council to take action on draft decisions I to IV.

Draft decisions I, II, III and IV were adopted (decisions 1989/126, 1989/127, 1989/128 and 1989/129).

33. The PRESIDENT suggested, if there were no objections, that the Council should take note of the note by the Secretary-General entitled "National experience relating to the situation of women in rural areas".

It was so decided (decision 1989/130).

34. The PRESIDENT said that the Second (Social) Committee, in paragraph 27 of part II (E/1989/90/Add.1 and Corr.1) of its report on agenda item 10, also recommended a draft resolution entitled "Enlargement of the Commission on the Status of Women" for adoption by the Council.

35. He invited the Council to take action on the draft resolution.

36. Mr. VILLAR (Observer for Spain), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that the Twelve were fully committed to United Nations efforts to promote the advancement of women in all societies. They attached great importance to the role of the Commission on the Status of Women and agreed to its enlargement. They could not, however, support the draft resolution recommended by the Second (Social) Committee, and those which were members of the Economic and Social Council would vote against it.

37. As a matter of principle, certain decisions affecting the fabric of the United Nations should be adopted only

by consensus. Unless all Member States agreed on the basic principles governing their work, they would never achieve the objectives established in the Charter of the United Nations. The lack of agreement on its composition would seriously damage the work of the Commission on the Status of Women in the future.

38. Since the beginning of the session, the Twelve had expressed their willingness to negotiate in good faith. They had made several proposals proving their willingness to increase the number of seats on the Commission, and had been ready to accept a significant increase. Their good faith had been met by a lack of willingness on the part of the Group of 77 to reach a compromise. The Twelve regretted that the negotiations had been called to an end by the Group of 77 when there was still time to reach a compromise and that the last proposal by the Twelve had never been adequately considered.

39. The draft before the Council reflected inflexibility and a lack of political will on the part of the Group of 77. Three regional groups were seeking to impose their views about an issue which ought to enjoy universal support. The Twelve did not regard the decision as a precedent. They were concerned that the confrontational atmosphere generated could have long-term repercussions and might damage the spirit which ought to prevail during current efforts to make the social sector of the United Nations more efficient.

40. Mr. FORTIER (Canada) said that his delegation and those of Australia and New Zealand, for whom he was also speaking, would vote against the draft resolution. They regretted most deeply the decision to enlarge the Commission on the Status of Women without reaching consensus on the subject. They were disappointed and dismayed that such an important matter should have to be decided by a vote. The position reflected in the text now before the Council was essentially unchanged from the opening position of one of the groups in the negotiations: a clear sign that no compromises had been made.

41. Australia, New Zealand and Canada accepted, in principle, the need to enlarge the Commission and had worked hard to reach consensus on the matter. The objectives of the Commission would have gained from an appropriate enlargement of the membership. As it was, the three countries could only regret both the decision taken in the Second (Social) Committee and the manner in which it had been reached. They hoped such an incident would never occur again. The spirit of a truly united United Nations must be sought in accommodation and compromise, co-operation and consensus. It was in the best interest of both the advancement of women and the Organization itself that the spirit of consensus which had prevailed at the Nairobi Conference should be restored.

42. Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries—Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway—said that the two Nordic countries which were members of the Council would vote against the draft resolution. From the outset they had accepted the need to enlarge the Commission, to reflect the fact that the desire for an improvement in the status of women was shared by all. To be fully representative, the Commission needed to be strengthened. But the Nordic countries had always held that any enlargement of the Commission and subsequent change in its composition should be based on consensus. They had worked long and hard to achieve such a consensus and felt deep regret and disappointment

that none had been found. They also regretted the course which the negotiations had taken and the manner in which action had been taken in the Second (Social) Committee. They hoped the Council would never again work in such an unfortunate and divisive manner. The United Nations drew its strength from co-operation and agreement; confrontation and disagreement would only weaken its role.

43. A year hence, the Commission on the Status of Women was due to meet in extended session to review the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.² It was essential that the spirit of consensus should be restored through a display of mutual respect, understanding and accommodation. He hoped that the delegations which had forced the question to a vote would bear that in mind.

44. Mr. RASTAM (Observer for Malaysia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said it had been most unfortunate, but also inevitable, that the Second (Social) Committee should have had to take action on the draft resolution by a vote. Over the preceding two weeks, negotiations had gone on in earnest, in a spirit of understanding, friendship and co-operation, and all sides had worked extremely hard to achieve a solution by consensus.

45. The Group of 77 had always been flexible and willing to look at serious proposals which, in its view, could provide the basis for consensus. Attempts to portray one group as unreasonable or uncompromising by comparison with others were, in its view, very unfair. There had been calls for more time to negotiate, but the question of expanding the Commission had been in the air since the 1985 Nairobi Conference. The intervening years could have been used for serious deliberations on the matter. The Group of 77 had always been ready to discuss the question constructively and work towards an understanding that the Commission needed to be enlarged on the basis of certain fundamental principles. For the past 23 years, the membership of the Commission had stood at 32. The increase in the total membership of the United Nations over that period clearly warranted a proportionate enlargement of the Commission. The Commission itself had discussed its enlargement at its thirty-third session, but had made no recommendation. In anticipation of the extended session of the Commission due to take place in 1990, the Group of 77 believed the time had come for definitive action and to that end had initiated the draft resolution now before the Council.

46. Member States of the United Nations, both developed and developing countries, attached high priority to activities advancing the cause and status of women. The Commission on the Status of Women played a crucial role in meeting that objective and was central in promoting international co-operation to integrate women into economic development programmes and activities. Those and other factors had made it necessary to enhance the work of the Commission and allow more developing countries to take part. But, in enlarging the Commission, the problem of overrepresentation of certain regions and underrepresentation of others needed to be addressed; the Group of 77 had always maintained that the allocation of seats should be guided by the principle of equitable geographical distribution. Thus, the Group had proposed no increase in the number of seats allocated to regions already adequately represented; instead, the extra seats should be given to regions which had been underrepre-

sented in the past. The Group had not advocated depriving any region of seats which it already held.

47. For the past four years, the Group of 77 had been looking forward to the enlargement of the Commission, in the conviction that it would further enhance the Commission's effectiveness—an important consideration in the context of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.² The Commission ought to be able to produce concrete recommendations during its extended session in 1990, but it would need the full support of all Member States. The Group of 77 sincerely hoped that no one would contemplate or take any action to hinder the work of the Commission after its enlargement. It sought a continuation of the climate of international co-operation which had prevailed in the past, because the Commission could do much to benefit all women, in both developed and developing countries.

48. Mrs. PELLICER (Observer for Mexico) said that her delegation welcomed the enlargement of the Commission on the basis of equitable geographical distribution. The draft resolution recommended by the Second (Social) Committee was in keeping with the mandates given to the Economic and Social Council. It would open the door to more co-operation in improving the status of women. The Commission on the Status of Women was one of the most outstanding United Nations organs and had set an example of efficiency and order in the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations. In developing countries, however, the status of women had been stagnating or declining in recent years. Thus, it was necessary to allow more developing countries to become members of the Commission. Constructive dialogue within the Commission would allow delegations to reach conclusions on the major obstacles to the advancement of women. Her delegation looked forward to taking part in the open-ended working group due to be convened at the extended session in 1990 and to finding there the spirit of professionalism and co-operation which the subject demanded.

49. Mr. ZAWACKI (Poland) said that the delegations of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and his own country would vote against the draft resolution because it disregarded a number of principles to which they attached importance. The decision to enlarge the Commission should have been taken by consensus. While allocating more seats to the developing countries, it ought to have taken account of the interests of all regional groups. The delegations for which he spoke had attended the negotiations in that hope. They did not believe that all possibilities for consensus had been fully explored. It was regrettable that such an important decision was to be taken by vote. The move might adversely affect the good spirit characteristic of current efforts to improve the lot of women. The decision must not constitute a precedent for other United Nations bodies.

50. Mrs. MUKHERJEE (India) warmly supported the position taken by the Group of 77, which had done a great deal to accommodate the interests of all groups and had not sought confrontation. As a matter of principle, all States should be able to participate in United Nations bodies on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, as laid down in the Charter. The Group of 77 would have been willing to negotiate on any proposal that acknowledged

the point; but none had been forthcoming—and it was not that Group which had called for a vote on the draft resolution, but a member of another regional group. The Group of 77 had not sought to take seats on the Commission away from anyone else; it merely sought justice for itself. The additional members would make the Commission a more effective body.

51. Mrs. SYAHRUDDIN (Indonesia) endorsed the position taken by the Group of 77, adding that her delegation would have been happier if the draft resolution had been supported by all delegations. She hoped that the additional members on the Commission would make for more balanced representation of all Member States. The decision to enlarge the membership would facilitate the Commission's task in coping with an ever-increasing range of responsibilities. In the end, she was confident, the decision would prove to have been a wise one.

52. Mrs. MBELLA NGOMBA (Cameroon) said that the groundwork for the decision had been laid at the 1985 Nairobi Conference. The importance of the Commission's task had been acknowledged in the decision that it should meet every year until the year 2000, despite the financial crisis in the United Nations. She greatly regretted attempts by some delegations to undermine the principles of equality and equitable geographical distribution governing representation on United Nations bodies. When emotions died down, it would be apparent that the enlarged membership afforded women all round the world an opportunity to contribute to the Commission's work. However the decision had been reached, everyone was working towards a common objective.

53. Mr. GRILLO (Colombia) said that his delegation supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and stressed the need to uphold the principle of the sovereign equality of Member States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The principle of equitable geographical distribution of the various regional groups was not taken into account in the Commission on the Status of Women. In that connection, he stressed the need to promote better understanding through increased international co-operation based on mutual trust among regions, shared responsibilities and the discarding of outdated notions. The membership of United Nations bodies should reflect the overall number and geographical diversity of the Member States. Observance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution in United Nations bodies would make the Organization truly universal and enhance the effectiveness of its work. Colombia, which believed that it was necessary to conduct a general review of the membership of the various United Nations bodies in order to ensure equitable regional representation, would vote in favour of the draft resolution under consideration.

54. Mr. MORA GODOY (Cuba) said that he fully supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and underscored the importance of ensuring the observance of the principles of equitable geographical distribution and the sovereign equality of Member States. The Group of 77 had shown its readiness to co-operate in order to solve the problem of the underrepresentation of developing countries in United Nations bodies. Cuba would vote in favour of the draft resolution because its adoption would give further impetus to the work of the Commission and the efforts of all States to improve the status of women.

55. Mr. GALAL (Observer for Egypt) stressed the need to ensure observance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution in the membership of United Nations bodies and to increase the representation of the States which had recently joined the Organization. The Group of 77 had worked continuously to reach a consensus and had not requested a vote on the draft resolution under consideration. He hoped that the draft resolution could still be adopted by consensus and appealed to all delegations to act in a spirit of co-operation.

56. Mr. TANIGUCHI (Japan) said that his delegation supported efforts to improve the status of women. In the past, however, a number of United Nations bodies had been enlarged, and participation by delegations in their work had subsequently decreased. The mere enlargement of a body did not necessarily enhance its effectiveness. Accordingly, Japan would vote against the draft resolution.

57. Mrs. ARUNGU-OLENDE (Kenya) said that her delegation fully supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77. The enlargement of the Commission on the Status of Women would enable women from developing countries to speak more effectively for themselves. The Group of 77 had overcome its differences and had reached a consensus on the matter. Other groups had failed to do so. The issue, however, would not divide women, who would continue to fight for true equality.

58. Ms. ZINDOGA (Observer for Zimbabwe) said that her delegation supported the statements made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and the representative of Kenya. The enlargement of the Commission would enrich its work. It was unfortunate that a consensus had not been achieved because a number of delegations had failed to act in a constructive manner.

59. Mr. TAHA (Sudan) said that he supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77. The enlargement of the Commission would give the millions of poverty-stricken women in developing countries a stronger voice. It was regrettable that a consensus had not been achieved and that a vote was inevitable. His delegation did not agree with the view that enlarging the membership of United Nations bodies led to decreased participation by delegations in the work of such bodies. The Sudan, therefore, would vote in favour of the draft resolution.

60. Mr. YOUSSEF (Iraq) said that his delegation supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Group of 77. Iraq could not accept the view that enlarging the membership of United Nations bodies brought about decreased participation by delegations. The United Nations must help all countries, regardless of their levels of economic and social development, to participate in the activities of the Organization. In that connection, he hoped that the current atmosphere of détente in international relations would promote efforts to ensure respect for United Nations principles, particularly that of the sovereign equality of all Member States and the principle of equitable geographical distribution in the membership of United Nations bodies.

A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution entitled "Enlargement of the Commission on the Status of Women".

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

The draft resolution entitled "Enlargement of the Commission on the Status of Women" was adopted by 35 votes to 19, with no abstentions (resolution 1989/45).

61. Miss BYRNE (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her country did not support the Council's decision to enlarge the Commission on the Status of Women. Such decisions must be initiated by the Commission itself. Then, and only then, should the Council endorse them. The question of enlarging the Commission had been extremely divisive. Her Government had negotiated in good faith in an attempt to achieve a consensus. A smaller Commission would be more effective and less bureaucratic. Unfortunately, enlargement would serve merely to politicize the only United Nations body responsible for the advancement of women.

62. There was little correlation between the current interest in enlarging the Commission and a sincere desire to improve the lives of women throughout the world. The lack of commitment to the Commission's work had been recently demonstrated at its last session at Vienna, when some elected members had failed to attend or had left before the completion of the session. If delegations were truly interested in improving the status of women in the world, they must attend the Commission's meetings, remain throughout its sessions and conduct a more candid appraisal of the situation of women in their own countries.

63. Since more Governments would be represented at future meetings of the Commission, delegations must work together to achieve real progress. They must tackle the problems that debased the lives of women, including child prostitution, female slavery, female circumcision, dowry deaths, self-sacrifice by widows and the offering of young girls as compensatory payment in inter-family disputes. Her Government did not view the adoption of the draft resolution as a precedent for other United Nations bodies, and intended to scrutinize the financial implications of the decision. At a time of budgetary restraint and organizational reform, it was necessary to avoid increased costs when restructuring United Nations bodies.

64. Ms. DU Yong (China) said that her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because it supported the enlargement of the Commission and observance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution in order to enable more developing countries to participate in its work. Her Government would have preferred adoption of the draft resolution by consensus. Nevertheless, the decision just taken would promote the Commission's work.

65. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 10.

AGENDA ITEM 11

Social development (E/1988/20, E/1989/25, E/1989/91 and Add.1)

(a) World social situation

(b) Social policy and social development

REPORT OF THE SECOND (SOCIAL) COMMITTEE

66. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had before it the report of the Second (Social) Committee (E/1989/91 and Add.1) on agenda item 11, which had been allocated to the Committee for consideration. In paragraph 58 of part one (E/1989/91) of the report, the Committee recommended 26 draft resolutions for adoption by the Council. Draft resolutions I to X were originally recommended by the Commission for Social Development in its report on its thirty-first session (E/1989/25, chap. I, sect. A). Paragraph 7 of draft resolution III was amended by the Committee. Draft resolutions XI to XXIV were originally recommended by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control in its report on its tenth session (E/1988/20, chap. I, sect. A).

67. The 26 draft resolutions were as follows: I, "Critical social situation in Africa"; II, "Social welfare, development and science and technology"; III, "Twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development"; IV, "Follow-up to the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future"; V, "Second review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging"; VI, "Youth in the contemporary world"; VII, "United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons"; VIII, "Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future and follow-up to the Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes"; IX, "Need to enhance international co-operation in the field of protection and assistance to the family"; X, "The social dimension of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade"; XI, "Statute of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute"; XII, "Implementation of the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power"; XIII, "United Nations network of government-appointed national correspondents in the field of crime prevention and control"; XIV, "African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders"; XV, "Procedures for the effective implementation of the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary"; XVI, "Guidelines for the effective implementation of the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary"; XVII, "Concerted international action against the forms of crime identified in the Milan Plan of Action"; XVIII, "Implementation of United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice"; XIX, "Implementation of the safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty"; XX, "Effective prevention and investigation of extra-legal, arbitrary and summary executions"; XXI, "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice"; XXII, "Domestic violence"; XXIII, "Review of the functioning and programme of work of the United Nations in crime prevention and criminal justice"; XXIV, "Continuation of preparations for the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and

the Treatment of Offenders”; XXV, “International co-operation in combating organized crime”; XXVI, “Achievement of social justice”.

68. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on draft resolutions I to XXVI.

Draft resolutions I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X and XI were adopted (resolutions 1989/46, 1989/47, 1989/48, 1989/49, 1989/50, 1989/51, 1989/52, 1989/53, 1989/54, 1989/55 and 1989/56).

69. The PRESIDENT said that in paragraph 5 of draft resolution XII the words “and of redress” should be changed to read “and for providing redress”.

Draft resolution XII was adopted (resolution 1989/57).

Draft resolutions XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV and XXVI were adopted (resolutions 1989/58, 1989/59, 1989/60, 1989/61, 1989/62, 1989/63, 1989/64, 1989/65, 1989/66, 1989/67, 1989/68, 1989/69, 1989/70 and 1989/71).

70. The PRESIDENT drew attention to paragraph 59 of part one (E/1989/91) of the report of the Second (Social) Committee, in which the Committee recommended four draft decisions for adoption by the Council, namely: I, “Report of the Commission for Social Development on its thirty-first session and provisional agenda and documentation for the thirty-second session of the Commission”; II, “Enlargement of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development”; III, “Report of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control on its tenth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the eleventh session of the Committee”; IV, “Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders”. Draft decision I was originally recommended by the Commission for Social Development in its report (E/1989/25, chap. I, sect. B). Draft decision III was originally recommended by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control in its report (E/1988/20, chap. I, sect. A).

71. He invited the Council to take action on draft decisions I to IV.

Draft decision I was adopted (decision 1989/131).

72. The PRESIDENT, referring to paragraph (b) of draft decision II, said that the Bureau recommended that the Council revert to the question of the nomination and confirmation of the three additional members at its second regular session of 1989. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the recommendation of the Bureau was accepted.

It was so decided.

Draft decision II was adopted as amended (decision 1989/132).

Draft decision III was adopted (decision 1989/133).

73. The PRESIDENT said that the Second (Social) Committee had adopted draft decision IV by a recorded vote of 43 to 2.

A recorded vote was taken on draft decision IV.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic

of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: None.

Draft decision IV was adopted by 51 votes to 1 (decision 1989/134).

74. Miss BYRNE (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote, said that the decision to hold the Congress away from the United Nations Office at Vienna was regrettable. Her delegation was concerned that the resources available to the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs had decreased, even as its commitments had increased. Moreover, holding the Congress in Vienna would have made it possible for all Member States to attend.

75. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the draft resolution entitled “World social situation”, recommended for adoption by the Council in paragraph 10 of part II (E/1989/91/Add.1) of the report of the Second (Social) Committee on agenda item 11.

A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution.

In favour: Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Poland, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The draft resolution was adopted by 39 votes to 1, with 13 abstentions (resolution 1989/72).

76. The PRESIDENT said, if there were no objections, that the Council should take note of the reports considered in connection with the question of social development, namely: the report of the Secretary-General on national experience in promoting the co-operative movement (E/1989/8) and the report of the Secretary-General on national experience in achieving far-reaching social and economic changes for the purpose of social progress (E/1989/14).

It was so decided (decision 1989/135).

77. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 11.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.