



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/34/781
7 December 1979

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/RUSSIAN

Thirty-fourth session
Agenda item 76

WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION

Report of the Third Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "World social situation: report of the Secretary-General" was included in the provisional agenda of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly in accordance with the Assembly resolution 31/84 of 13 December 1976.
2. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 21 September 1979, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Third Committee.
3. The Committee considered this item at its 47th to 50th and 61st and 67th meetings, held from 15 to 19 November and on 28 November and 4 December 1979. The summary records of those meetings (A/C.3/34/SR.47-50, 61 and 67) contain the views expressed by the representatives of Member States on the item.
4. The Committee had before it the following documents:
 - (a) 1978 Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/557 and Add.1-3);
 - (b) Report of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Fez from 8 to 12 May 1979 (A/34/389 and Corr.1).
5. At the 47th meeting, on 15 November, the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs introduced the item (see A/C.3/34/SR.47).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.3/34/L.54

6. At the 61st meeting, on 28 November the representative of India, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations which are members of the Group of 77, introduced two draft resolutions (A/C.3/34/L.54) entitled "World social situation", which read as follows:

A

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling that the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, contained in General Assembly resolution 2542 (XXIV) of 11 December 1969 is a basis for national and international action in the field of social development,

"Recalling its resolutions 2771 (XXVI) of 22 November 1971 and 31/84 of 13 December 1976 on the world social situation and 33/48 of 14 December 1978 on world social development,

"Recalling also its resolutions 2626 (XXV) of 24 October 1970 containing the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974 containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation, and 33/193 on preparations for the new International Development Strategy,

"Recalling further its resolution 32/197 which, inter alia, requests the United Nations Secretariat to prepare 'on a regular basis, global economic and social surveys and projections',

"Bearing in mind that social progress and development are founded on respect for the dignity and value of the human person,

"Aware that the fundamental aim of development is the sustained increase of the well-being of the entire population on the basis of its full participation in the process of development and a fair distribution of the benefits therefrom,

"Conscious that each Government has the primary role and ultimate responsibility of ensuring the social progress and well-being of its people, of planning social development measures as part of comprehensive development plans, of encouraging and co-ordinating or integrating all national efforts towards this end and of introducing, when necessary, changes in the social structure,

"Reaffirming the right of every country to adopt the economic and social system that it deems the most appropriate for its own development and not to be subjected to discrimination of any kind as a result,

"Considering that rapid economic growth must go hand in hand with qualitative and structural changes in each country and that social and sectoral disparities, where they exist, should be substantially reduced,

"Stressing the importance of the adoption of measures to ensure the effective participation, as appropriate, of all the elements of society in the preparation and execution of national plans and programmes of economic and social development, and of the mobilization of public opinion and the dissemination of social information, in support of the principles and objectives of social progress and development,

"Noting that the world socio-economic situation is characterized by the deterioration of the economic situation in the developing countries and the continually widening gap between the developing countries and the developed countries,

"Considering also that the speedy conclusion of negotiations between developed and developing countries for the preparation of the new international development strategy is necessary and would contribute towards achieving the desired pace of socio-economic progress in developing countries,

"Convinced of the necessity to achieve the rapid and complete elimination of the obstacles to the economic and social progress of peoples, particularly colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, apartheid, aggression, occupation and foreign domination and all other forms of inequality and exploitation of peoples,

"Re-emphasizing that the primary responsibility for the development of developing countries rests upon themselves, but that, however great their own efforts, these will not enable them to achieve the desired development goals expeditiously as they must unless equitable economic and commercial relations between developed and developing countries are established, and increased financial and technological resources are available to the developing countries,

"Having considered the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation, 1/ which presents an overview of socio-economic trends and policies,

"1. Notes that the economic and social situation in the world today remains disturbing;

"2. Notes also the slow rate of implementing the Declaration on Social Progress and the equally disappointing progress made towards realizing the various over-all development goals adopted and reaffirmed in the Second International Development Strategy;

1/ E/CN.5/557 and Add.1-3.

"3. Reaffirms that the elimination of all forms of dependence and oppression such as aggression, foreign occupation, colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination constitutes a prerequisite for world social and economic progress;

"4. Reaffirms the socio-economic development objectives which were established by the international community during the 1970s, such as the elimination of hunger and malnutrition by the year 1985, full employment by the year 2000, the eradication of illiteracy by the end of the 1980s, safe and adequate water supplies by 1990, 74 years of life expectancy in all countries by the year 2000, the full integration of women in political, economic and social affairs, and health for all by the year 2000;

"5. Calls upon all Member States to promote economic and social progress by the formulation and implementation of a set of policy measures to achieve their goals and objectives, within the framework of national priorities and interests, in the fields of employment, education, health, nutrition, housing facilities, the well-being of children, full participation of youth in the development process and the full integration and participation of women in development;

"6. Recommends that Member States adopt measures to ensure the effective participation, as appropriate, of all sectors of society, as an integral element in local, regional and national development plans and programmes with the purpose of securing the effective mobilization and utilization of human resources as well as more equitable distribution of development benefits;

"7. Emphasizes the importance of the establishment of the new international economic order for the achievement of social progress;

"8. Emphasizes also that rapid social progress of developing countries requires substantially increased multilateral and bilateral financial and/or technical contribution to national development efforts, adapted to new and appropriate technology, and rendered within the framework of the development plans of developing countries;

"9. Deeply regrets the failure of most of the developed countries to comply with the responsibilities solemnly agreed to in the context of the goals, targets and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade;

"10. Calls upon the relevant organizations and bodies in the United Nations system to mobilize the resources at their disposal to aim at achieving the main objectives set forth in the Declaration on Social Progress and Development;

"11. Requests the Secretary-General to designate a liaison officer at Headquarters, within the existing resources of the United Nations, to follow up the activities relating to the Declaration on Social Progress and Development;

"12. Decides that future reports on the world social situation must contribute to the identification and projection of emerging social issues of international concern, and to the discussion of relationships among major development issues, which have both international and national dimensions;

"13. Requests the Secretary-General to issue the report on the world social situation every three years, taking into consideration the provisions of the present resolution, and including a report on the social progress made during the Third Development Decade, in the light of the goals and objectives of the new international development strategy, and following the procedures that will be decided upon for its review and appraisal;

"14. Requests also the Secretary-General to organize within the Programme of Advisory Services and bearing in mind the goals and objectives of the new international development strategy, an international seminar to compare policies, institutions and experiences of Member States in the participation of all sectors of society in their economic and social development, as well as collective bargaining, worker participation in management and workers' self-management, and to submit a report on the results of this seminar to the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly within the agenda item 'World social situation';

"15. Decides to consider at its thirty-seventh session the item 'The World Social Situation'.

B

Methodology for the preparation of the report
on the world social situation

"The General Assembly,

"Noting that the methodology used in studying the social situation in the world should be further improved,

"Bearing in mind the need for the methodology to be mainly based on quantitative and qualitative indicators of the world social situation,

"Requests the Secretary-General to undertake in close co-operation with the executive heads of the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, appropriate measures for the improvement of the methodology for the preparation of the report on the World Social Situation and the report on the Implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, and to report thereon, through the Economic and Social Council, to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly."

7. At the 67th meeting, on 4 December, the representative of India, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations which are members of the Group of 77, revised the text of draft resolution A/C.3/34/54 (see para. 6 above) as follows:

/...

In draft resolution A

- (a) Replace the eleventh preambular paragraph by the following:

"Noting that the present world socio-economic situation is characterized by deterioration in the economic situation, particularly in the developing countries, and deeply concerned by the fact that inequities and imbalances in international economic relations have widened the gap between the developed and developing countries,";

- (b) In the thirteenth preambular paragraph, replace the word "particularly" by the words "and that", and add, at the end of the paragraph, the following:

"constitute major obstacles to the economic and social progress of developing countries and peoples,";

- (c) In the fourteenth preambular paragraph, replace the word "established" by the word "developed";

- (d) In operative paragraph 2, delete the word "equally";

- (e) Replace operative paragraph 3 by the following:

"Reaffirms that all forms of dependence and oppression such as aggression, foreign occupation, colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination constitute major obstacles for world social and economic progress and therefore must be eliminated without delay,"

- (f) In operative paragraph 8, replace the words "substantially increased" by the words: "considerably enhanced";

- (g) Replace operative paragraph 9 by the following:

"Regrets that most developed countries have not achieved the specific targets of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade";

- (h) Delete operative paragraph 11 and renumber the subsequent paragraphs accordingly;

- (i) In the newly renumbered operative paragraph 11, replace the words "and projection of emerging social issues" by the words "of emerging social trends";

- (j) In the newly renumbered operative paragraph 13, add the words: "when adopted," after the words: "international development strategy";

In draft resolution B

- (k) In the first preambular paragraph, replace the word "methodology" by the words "methods for collecting, analysing, interpreting and evaluating information and data";

- (1) In the second preambular paragraph replace the words "the methodology to" by the words "a methodology which would".

8. At the same meeting, the Committee voted on the draft resolutions A/C.3/34/L.54 as follows:

- (a) Operative paragraph 9 of draft resolution A was adopted by 106 votes to none, with 18 abstentions:
- (b) The draft resolutions as a whole, as revised, were adopted without a vote. (see para. 9 below).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

9. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

World social situation

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling that the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, contained in General Assembly resolution 2542 (XXIV) of 11 December 1969, is a basis for national and international action in the field of social development,

Recalling its resolutions 2771 (XXVI) of 22 November 1971 and 31/84 of 13 December 1976 on the world social situation and 33/48 of 14 December 1978 on world social development,

Recalling also its resolutions 2626 (XXV) of 24 October 1970 containing the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974 containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation, and 33/193 of 29 January 1979 on preparations for an international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade,

Recalling further its resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 in which, inter alia, it requested the United Nations Secretariat to prepare "on a regular basis, global economic and social surveys and projections",

Bearing in mind that social progress and development are founded on respect for the dignity and value of the human person,

/...

Aware that the fundamental aim of development is the sustained increase of the well-being of the entire population on the basis of its full participation in the process of development and a fair distribution of the benefits therefrom,

Conscious that each Government has the primary role and ultimate responsibility of ensuring the social progress and well-being of its people, of planning social development measures as part of comprehensive development plans, of encouraging and co-ordinating or integrating all national efforts towards this end and of introducing, when necessary, changes in the social structure,

Reaffirming the right of every country to adopt the economic and social system that it deems the most appropriate for its own development and not to be subjected to discrimination of any kind as a result,

Considering that rapid economic growth must go hand in hand with qualitative and structural changes in each country and that social and sectoral disparities, where they exist, should be substantially reduced,

Stressing the importance of the adoption of measures to ensure the effective participation, as appropriate, of all the elements of society in the preparation and execution of national plans and programmes of economic and social development, and of the mobilization of public opinion and the dissemination of social information, in support of the principles and objectives of social progress and development,

Noting that the present world socio-economic situation is characterized by deterioration in the economic situation, particularly in the developing countries, and deeply concerned by the fact that inequities and imbalances in international economic relations have widened the gap between the developed and developing countries,

Considering also that the speedy conclusion of negotiations between developed and developing countries for the preparation of the new international development strategy is necessary and would contribute towards achieving the desired pace of socio-economic progress in developing countries,

Convinced of the necessity to achieve the rapid and complete elimination of the obstacles to the economic and social progress of peoples, and that colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, apartheid, aggression, occupation and foreign domination and all other forms of inequality and exploitation of peoples constitute major obstacles to the economic and social progress of developing countries and peoples,

Re-emphasizing that the primary responsibility for the development of developing countries rests upon themselves, but that, however great their own efforts, these will not enable them to achieve the desired development goals as expeditiously as they must unless equitable economic and commercial relations between developed and developing countries are developed, and increased financial and technological resources are available to the developing countries,

Having considered the 1978 Report on the World Social Situation 2/ which presents an overview of socio-economic trends and policies,

1. Notes that the economic and social situation in the world today remains disturbing;
2. Notes also the slow rate of implementing the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the disappointing progress made towards realizing the various over-all development goals adopted and reaffirmed in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade;
3. Reaffirms that all forms of dependence and oppression such as aggression, foreign occupation, colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination constitute major obstacles for world social and economic progress and therefore must be eliminated without delay;
4. Reaffirms the socio-economic development objectives which were established by the international community during the 1970s, such as the elimination of hunger and malnutrition by the year 1985, full employment by the year 2000, the eradication of illiteracy by the end of the 1980s, safe and adequate water supplies by 1990, 74 years of life expectancy in all countries by the year 2000, the full integration of women in political, economic and social affairs, and health for all by the year 2000;
5. Calls upon all Member States to promote economic and social progress by the formulation and implementation of a set of policy measures to achieve their goals and objectives, within the framework of national priorities and interests, in the fields of employment, education, health, nutrition, housing facilities, the well-being of children, full participation of youth in the development process and the full integration and participation of women in development;
6. Recommends that Member States adopt measures to ensure the effective participation, as appropriate, of all sectors of society, as an integral element in local, regional and national development plans and programmes with the purpose of securing the effective mobilization and utilization of human resources as well as more equitable distribution of development benefits;
7. Emphasizes the importance of the establishment of the new international economic order for the achievement of social progress;
8. Emphasizes also that rapid social progress of developing countries requires considerably enhanced multilateral and bilateral financial and/or technical contribution to national development efforts, adapted to new and appropriate technology, and rendered within the framework of the development plans of developing countries;
9. Regrets that most developed countries have not achieved the specific targets of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade;

2/ E/CN.5/557 and Add.1-3.

10. Calls upon the relevant organizations and bodies in the United Nations system to mobilize the resources at their disposal to aim at achieving the main objectives set forth in the Declaration on Social Progress and Development;

11. Decides that future reports on the world social situation must contribute to the identification of emerging social trends of international concern, and to the discussion of relationships among major development issues, which have both international and national dimensions;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to issue the report on the world social situation every three years, taking into consideration the provisions of the present resolution, and including a report on the social progress made during the third United Nations development decade, in the light of the goals and objectives of the new international development strategy, and following the procedures that will be decided upon for its review and appraisal;

13. Also requests the Secretary-General to organize, within the Programme of Advisory Services and bearing in mind the goals and objectives of the new international development strategy when adopted, an international seminar to compare policies, institutions and experiences of Member States in the participation of all sectors of society in their economic and social development, as well as collective bargaining, worker participation in management and workers' self-management, and to submit a report on the results of this seminar to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session under the agenda item entitled "World social situation";

14. Decides to consider at its thirty-seventh session the item entitled "World social situation".

B

The General Assembly,

Noting that the methods for collecting, analysing, interpreting and evaluating information and data used in studying the social situation in the world should be further improved,

Bearing in mind the need for a methodology which would be mainly based on quantitative and qualitative indicators of the world social situation,

Requests the Secretary-General to undertake, in close co-operation with the executive heads of the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, appropriate measures for the improvement of the methodology for the preparation of the report on the world social situation and the report on the implementation of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, and to report thereon, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.