



Chairman: Miss Maria GROZA (Romania).

*Tribute to the memory of Mr. Yusof bin Ishak,
President of Singapore*

1. The CHAIRMAN said she was sure that she could speak for all members of the Committee in expressing to the delegation of Singapore her deepest sympathy on the death of the President of Singapore. She requested the representative of Singapore to convey to his Government and to the family of the deceased President the condolences of the Third Committee.

2. Mr. JAYAKUMAR (Singapore) thanked the Chairman and the members of the Third Committee for their expression of sympathy.

AGENDA ITEM 47

Respect for human rights in armed conflicts: report of the Secretary-General (continued) (A/7720, A/8003, chap. IX, sect. E; A/8052, A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1798/Rev.3, A/C.3/L.1806/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1807, A/C.3/L.1808/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (continued)

3. The CHAIRMAN regretted the misunderstanding of the preceding day, which had been due to the failure of the Conference Service to announce that a meeting was to take place. She hoped that it would be possible to remedy the matter by holding additional meetings later on. On the other hand, the members of the Committee had, as a result, had time for further consultation, and she would therefore like to make 5 p.m. that evening the deadline for submitting written amendments to the draft resolutions on the question before the Committee.

4. Mr. RATTANSEY (United Republic of Tanzania) pointed out that the revised texts of some draft resolutions had been distributed that morning and that delegations wishing to submit amendments must have enough time to study those texts carefully and to consult other delegations. He therefore suggested that the deadline should be postponed to the following morning.

5. Mrs. BARISH (Costa Rica) did not oppose the suggestion made by the Tanzanian representative, but pointed out that the Committee was already considerably behind in its work and that, consequently, it might be better for all amendments to be submitted that afternoon.

6. The CHAIRMAN, noting that the representative of Costa Rica did not oppose the suggestion made by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, proposed that all amendments should be submitted in writing not later than the following morning.

It was so decided.

7. Lord ST. OSWALD (United Kingdom) conveyed his deep sympathy to the delegation of Singapore on the death of the President of Singapore.

8. On behalf of the sponsors, he introduced the revised text of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1, which was the result of extensive consultations between delegations representing all geographical areas. He wished to make a correction in the tenth preambular paragraph, where the word "elaborate" ought to read "adopt". Unlike other draft resolutions, document A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1 dealt with purely procedural matters, particularly the way in which work on improving the application of human rights in armed conflicts could best be carried forward. In the preamble the text recognized the continuing importance of existing humanitarian rules relating to armed conflicts, though it realized that they did not adequately meet all contemporary situations and, consequently, that it was necessary to develop the substance of those rules and the procedures for their implementation. Both the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross had important contributions to make towards improving the application of human rights in armed conflicts, and the two bodies must continue to work closely together. The General Assembly would recognize, *inter alia*, the important role that the holding of the Conference of government experts to be convened by the Red Cross should play. It was particularly to be hoped that that meeting would produce recommendations for the development of humanitarian laws applicable to armed conflict. The sponsors believed that one or more plenipotentiary diplomatic conferences might be convened at an appropriate time and after due preparation in order to adopt international legal instruments for the reaffirmation and development of humanitarian rules in that field. The use of such conferences had already been envisaged in resolution XIII of the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross. Experience had proved, moreover, that the adoption of international instruments by a plenipotentiary conference gave a special status to those instruments and that, accordingly, all States, not only States Members of the United Nations, could participate in the proceedings. It should be pointed out that the wording of the tenth preambular paragraph had been modified in such a way that it did not commit Governments in any way and that it did not decide what authority should convene such a conference or when it should take place.

9. In operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution the Secretary-General was asked to invite comments by Governments on his two reports (A/7720 and A/8052). The sponsors felt that those comments should reach the Secretariat at the latest by the end of April 1971, so that government experts attending the meeting to be convened by the International Committee of the Red Cross towards the end of May would have time to study them, together with the Secretary-General's reports and such other documents as would be transmitted to them. The Secretary-General was further asked to present a report to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session on the comments by Governments on his two reports, on the results of the conference of government experts and on any other developments that he might consider relevant. Operative paragraph 4 provided that the General Assembly would consider that question again in all its aspects at its twenty-sixth session. That paragraph had been worded so as not to restrict in any way the aspects of the question that the General Assembly might decide to consider. Nevertheless, the sponsors expected that, at its twenty-sixth session, the General Assembly would consider ways of ensuring a better application of existing instruments and of bringing about additional instruments assisted by the results of the conference of government experts.

10. The sponsors hoped that their revised text was sufficiently flexible and restrained to receive the unanimous support of the members of the Committee.

11. Mr. DE GAIFFIER D'HESTROY (Belgium) associated himself with the message of sympathy and condolences that the President had conveyed to the delegation of Singapore.

12. His delegation wished to secure recognition for the human values that were endangered by armed conflict and considered that the international provisions for the protection of human rights in armed conflicts should be brought up to date. It thanked the Secretary-General for his two excellent reports and agreed with him that it would be necessary to adapt the humanitarian rules to the new conditions, while the text of the four Geneva Conventions would remain intact as far as possible.

13. Draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1, of which his country was a sponsor, met the need for adopting a plan of work that would take into account what had already been done and what had been planned. His Government had already agreed to participate in the conference of government experts which was to meet at Geneva and, in that connexion, the tenth preambular paragraph was intended not only to ensure the proper continuity of the work but also to preserve and encourage the patterns of harmonious co-operation that had come into being at the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross. That Conference had recommended that an effort should be made to draft as quickly as possible specific rules—the need for which was stressed in the fourth preambular paragraph—to supplement existing humanitarian international law.

14. Draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1 reaffirmed the principle of the joint competence of the United Nations and of the International Committee of the Red Cross in drawing attention to the laws and customs applicable in armed conflicts, for it was desirable that co-operation

between those two bodies should continue and be developed in 1971.

15. Any final instrument adopted on that subject could be either an additional Protocol to the Geneva Convention or a separate instrument. His delegation had no preference in the matter but, as far as procedure was concerned, it would prefer to see the instrument adopted by a conference either of States that were parties to the Geneva Convention or of other interested States as well—to be convened by an interested State. The tenth preambular paragraph, for instance, seemed to indicate a means of achieving concrete results within a reasonable time.

16. His delegation sincerely hoped that draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1 would be adopted by a very large majority.

17. Mr. VAN WALSUM (Netherlands) associated himself with the messages of sympathy conveyed to the delegation of Singapore on the death of the President of Singapore.

18. The Netherlands delegation had noted with appreciation that the large majority of delegations had not sought to use the discussion on respect for human rights in armed conflicts to force through a decision on a particular aspect of the problem, which was to be considered in its entirety by the conference of government experts to be convened by the Red Cross in 1971. As long as no consensus had emerged on the priorities in that field, resolutions that concentrated on particular problems were of doubtful expediency. It was understandable that many delegations should be concerned by certain aspects of modern warfare which seemed to require the adoption of new rules of international law. His delegation was grateful for the restraint shown by those delegations, because it felt that if the Committee tried to formulate rules—even of a preliminary nature—for each situation, it would become bogged down in detail.

19. His delegation shared the concern underlying the draft resolution on the protection of journalists engaged on dangerous missions (A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1), in view of the important functions performed by journalists, and it agreed that the protection afforded journalists by the Geneva Conventions was insufficient, because the provisions of those conventions applied only to war correspondents in the technical sense of the word and to international armed conflicts. However, his delegation felt that the protection of journalists could not be considered separately and that concrete decisions in that field should therefore be avoided so long as the over-all question of the application of humanitarian rules of law to non-international armed conflicts had not been examined.

20. Draft resolution A/C.3/L.1798/Rev.3 approached that question from a political and legal standpoint, characterized by the repeated use of the term "aggressive wars", to which his delegation could not subscribe. Operative paragraph 4 seemed to grant arrested freedom fighters the status of prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions. Such a classification was not justified by the actual wording of the Conventions; at the most, the sponsors might have said that freedom fighters, in case of their arrest, should be treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the

Treatment of Prisoners of War. Even then, however, his delegation would have had some reservations, because that paragraph prejudged a question which still awaited regulation by new provisions of international law.

21. With regard to draft resolution A/C.3/L.1808/Rev.1, relating to the treatment of prisoners of war, his delegation could not endorse the theory advanced by some delegations according to which the party to a conflict which had unleashed an aggressive war was collectively represented by war criminals, who, for that reason, could not benefit from the protection granted to prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions. In most conflicts, each party considered the other to be the aggressor, and that theory would therefore render the Geneva Conventions inapplicable to almost all armed conflicts.

22. His delegation was generally favourable to the Norwegian draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1806/Rev.1), but wished to emphasize that it attached paramount importance to the sentence immediately preceding the operative part of that resolution, which stated that the affirmation of certain basic principles did not prejudice their future elaboration within the framework of progressive development of the international law of armed conflicts.

23. Miss EDMONDS (United States of America) associated herself with the expressions of sympathy to the delegation of Singapore on the death of that country's President, Mr. Yusof bin Ishak.

24. She said that, in introducing draft resolution A/C.3/L.1808/Rev.1, the sponsors wished to stress the importance of strict observance of international humanitarian conventions, particularly the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, as had the Secretary-General and the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross. Operative paragraph 5 was designed to meet the concerns of some delegations with regard to the treatment to be accorded combatants not covered by article 4 of the Geneva Convention. The sponsors did not believe that a resolution should attempt to interpret the Convention as applying or not applying to "freedom fighters", but they urged that combatants in armed conflict who were not covered by article 4 of the Convention should be accorded the same treatment as that granted to prisoners of war by international law. The sponsors believed that that paragraph should meet the legitimate concerns of all delegations.

25. Further, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1808/Rev.1 believed they were expressing the opinion of most members of the Committee in seeking to confirm the rules laid down by the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War and to guarantee compliance with that Convention, until such time as the existing conventions were expanded to cover new categories of persons. The humanitarian requirements expressed by that draft resolution should meet with the support of all members of the Committee.

26. Mrs. DAES (Greece) said that she would like to repeat personally the expressions of sympathy to the delegation of Singapore made by the Chairman on behalf of the Committee as a whole.

27. In accordance with her statement at the 1793rd meeting, her delegation had participated actively in consultations aimed at merging the various draft resolutions into a common text which might command general support. It was gratifying that those efforts had been successful, at least as regards the resolutions dealing with procedural matters; as a result, her delegation had withdrawn its own draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1807) and had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1. Some parts of the preamble of the latter resolution, and also operative paragraphs 4 and 6, contained ideas taken from draft resolution A/C.3/L.1807. Her delegation attached particular importance to the fourth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1, which emphasized that because existing humanitarian rules did not adequately meet modern needs, it was necessary to develop the substance of those rules and procedures for their implementation. Her delegation also welcomed the sixth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 3, and wished to comment briefly on the tenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 4, which were the result of a compromise between the sponsors and several other delegations. Her delegation felt that the convening of diplomatic conferences referred to in the tenth preambular paragraph was only one of many ways of reaffirming and developing the rules of humanitarian laws applicable to armed conflicts. Although the wording of that paragraph emphasized the possibility of convening conferences of plenipotentiaries, it in no way precluded recourse to other procedures, possibly within the framework of the United Nations. In operative paragraph 4, the use of the words "in all its aspects" clearly indicated that the General Assembly reserved the right to decide, in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time, on the advisability of establishing a committee of government experts to deal with that complex and important subject. It was also clear from that paragraph that the General Assembly, at its twenty-sixth session, might consider other methods of ensuring the application of existing instruments and rules for the protection of human rights in armed conflicts and elaborate such new rules as it might deem necessary.

28. Her delegation wished to thank the sponsors of the original draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809, in particular the United Kingdom delegation, for their sincere spirit of co-operation; it was also grateful to the Swedish delegation for its help in working out the revised text. Full advantage should be taken of the activities planned by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and in particular of the conference of government experts to be convened in May and June 1971. The work performed by that conference should be important not only to the activities of the United Nations but also to the international community as a whole.

29. Her delegation had some reservations regarding operative paragraphs 2 and 5 of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1798/Rev.3; if a separate vote was taken on those paragraphs, it would abstain. Nevertheless, it would vote for the adoption of the draft resolution as a whole, and also for the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1806/Rev.1 relating to the protection of civilian populations, the operative part of which met with its particular approval.

30. Although her delegation enthusiastically supported the idea of granting special protection to journalists, it had

certain reservations with regard to operative paragraphs 4 and 5 of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1, particularly the idea of involving the Commission on Human Rights in the preparation of an international agreement on that subject.

31. In conclusion, her delegation hoped that draft resolution A/C.3/L.1808/Rev.1 relating to the treatment of prisoners of war, of which it was a sponsor, would prove acceptable to the large majority of members in view of its purely humanitarian character. It was that purely humanitarian spirit that had led the sponsors, in line with the suggestions made by several delegations, to urge in operative paragraph 5 that combatants not covered by article 4 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War should be accorded the same humane treatment defined by the principles of international law applied to prisoners of war. In the view of her delegation, that problem was not exclusively American or African, but one of universal concern. It was convinced, too, that it was only by the full implementation of the existing humanitarian instruments and the development of new rules and procedures that a more humane world would be created.

32. Begum HAMIDULLAH (Pakistan) expressed her very sincere condolences to the delegation of Singapore on the occasion of the death of that country's President, Mr. Yusof bin Ishak. She read out a telegram from the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs thanking the Chairman and the Third Committee for their messages of sympathy in connexion with the cyclone and tidal bore that had struck East Pakistan.

33. The Pakistan delegation agreed with the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1 that journalists engaged on missions in areas where an armed conflict was taking place should be afforded better protection. However, it had some reservations, since it felt that journalists enjoying protection should be *bona fide* war correspondents and that rules should be adopted at the same time to guarantee objective reporting by the correspondents. Those rules would be incorporated into an agreement or declaration which would form an international code of professional ethics for journalists on foreign soil. As to the procedural aspects of the draft resolution, her delegation was not convinced that it would be wise to refer the question to the Commission on Human Rights because, first, the Commission's agenda was already extremely heavy and, secondly, the question of respect for human rights in armed conflicts as a whole would be considered by the conference of government experts to be convened by the International Committee of the Red Cross. There would thus be little point in considering merely one aspect of the question. However, despite its reservations, the Pakistan delegation would be guided by humanitarian considerations and would vote for draft resolution A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1.

34. Mr. PAOLINI (France) expressed his condolences to the representative of Singapore and his Government on the death of the President of that country.

35. His delegation wholeheartedly supported and would vote for draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1. It was glad that the sponsors were asking States to observe fully the provisions of existing humanitarian conventions; that re-

quest was of great importance and should be reiterated in all pertinent draft resolutions. It was the prime duty of the United Nations to urge that humanitarian conventions should be implemented, just as it was the prime duty of the signatory States to apply the Geneva Conventions. The essential need was not to update or amend the Geneva Conventions, but to find a way of ensuring their full implementation. Besides, the way to develop humanitarian law was to add new instruments and not to amend and replace existing ones. In that connexion, the decision of the International Committee of the Red Cross to convene a conference of government experts in 1971 to study that very important matter showed that the process of preparing new instruments was already under way; the new instruments which the conference would prepare would be transmitted to the International Conference of the Red Cross and then to a diplomatic conference which would draft the final versions; in addition, the international societies of the Red Cross would study and act on the matter at the conference to be held at The Hague in March 1971.

36. He welcomed the fact that in operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1 the Secretary-General was requested to invite Governments to comment upon both of his reports. The second report (A/8052) had been issued late and the competent Government departments had not had time to study that document. It was important that they should do so at a time when they would also be considering the proposals to be submitted to the committee of experts of the International Committee of the Red Cross. In that connexion, he wished to make a few preliminary observations on the report in document A/8052. In chapter V, war correspondents were classified as combatants entitled to protection; that was an incorrect interpretation of the Geneva Conventions, where war correspondents were placed among persons who accompanied the armed forces without actually being members of them; they were not combatants. His delegation requested the Secretariat to correct that part of the report. He pointed out an error in the French text of chapter XIII, paragraph 261, which spoke of "*l'heureux effet qu'a eu . . . l'entrée en vigueur du Pacte international relatif aux droits civils et politiques*", whereas, in fact, the Covenant had not yet come into force. It was stated elsewhere in the report that the protection deriving from the Geneva Conventions was not as full as that provided in the Covenants; but that observation was of purely theoretical interest, as the Geneva Conventions were in force whereas the Covenants were not. No one could at the present time foresee how the Covenants might be applied in armed conflicts, particularly with regard to recognition of the right to life. Paragraph 264 cited the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, approved by the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-fourth session in 1957; while he sympathized with the commendable aim underlying the paragraph, he observed that a prisoner of war was not a criminal but an enemy who, lest he should participate in the fighting, was to be detained until the hostilities had ended, when he should be freed immediately. Thus it was not penal law but humanitarian law that was applicable to him, a fundamental distinction which underlay all provisions protecting prisoners of war. His delegation opposed the recommendation in paragraph 262 that a committee of experts should be set up, because it considered that the authority of the Red

Cross in the matter should be respected and it feared that some duplication of effort might occur since the International Committee of the Red Cross had already embarked on the process of drafting new instruments.

37. Operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1 rightly requested the Secretary-General to transmit the two reports and the comments by Governments to the International Committee of the Red Cross. However, as time was short, a time-limit for the submission of replies should be set which would allow Governments adequate time to respond and yet ensure that the replies could reach the conference of government experts which was to be held in May 1971. It would be quite appropriate for the records of the discussions and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights to be transmitted to the conference. He believed that the second of the Secretary-General's reports should be sent to the Commission on Human Rights, it being the specialized organ in the matter. It was somewhat paradoxical to suggest, as was done in the report, that an *ad hoc* committee of experts or even a new international organ might be established to study the question, when the competent specialized organ, i.e. the Commission on Human Rights, had not even been invited to consider it.

38. Speaking on behalf of all the sponsors of the draft resolution, he announced that a further revision of the text would be issued. The sponsors had approved the suggestion of the representative of Singapore and had decided to insert between the second and third preambular paragraphs a new paragraph to read:

“*Considering* that it is essential for the United Nations to obtain complete information concerning armed conflicts and that journalists, whatever their nationality, have an important role to play in that regard.”

39. In the fifth preambular paragraph, the sponsors had omitted reference to the Fourth Geneva Convention, the one applicable to war correspondents. They had therefore decided to amend the paragraph and to divide its contents into two separate paragraphs. The first of them would begin: “*Recognizing* that certain types of protection can be granted to journalists under...” and would cite the relevant articles of the four Geneva Conventions; the second would be worded:

“*Being aware*, however, that these provisions do not cover all categories of journalists and do not correspond to the present needs of journalists engaged on dangerous missions.”

The sponsors had deleted the words “is insufficient”, since they might suggest adverse criticism of the Geneva Conventions, whereas, on the contrary, operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution called for full implementation of those instruments.

40. In operative paragraph 4, the words “question of preparing” had been replaced by “the possibility of preparing”. The purpose of that change was to obviate any delay by empowering the Commission on Human Rights, which was the competent organ in the matter, to refer the

question to another competent organ in the event that the Commission did not have the time to complete its consideration of the question at its twenty-seventh session.

41. It had been said that the possibility of referring the question to the organs of the International Red Cross should not be excluded. Operative paragraph 5 had therefore been amended in two places: the words “the draft” had been replaced by the words “a draft”, and at the end, the words “the General Assembly...” had been replaced by the words “as soon as possible by the General Assembly or by some other appropriate international body”; there was no reason why the body should not be the Red Cross.

42. He would prefer the General Assembly to take up the question after it had been considered by the Commission on Human Rights. The United Nations had a responsibility towards journalists since it was directly affected by the information they gave to the world in the course of their mission. At the 1842nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 1970, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had pointed out the way in which the objective assistance of the press, especially in the Western countries, had speeded up the decolonization process. Moreover, the International Federation of Journalists was turning towards the United Nations. In 1968 it had made a first draft of a convention on the international protection of journalists—on which the French delegation had not taken a stand—assigning a certain role to the United Nations. The draft had provided for an international bureau of experts appointed by the Secretary-General, who would be asked to prepare a universally recognized identification document, and it had thus entrusted the United Nations with responsibilities and a clearly defined role in that area.

43. The draft resolution of which he was a sponsor took on even greater importance in view of the fact that the background documents to be submitted to the conference of government experts did not deal with the question of the protection of journalists. He believed, however, that wide latitude should be maintained at the procedural level so that after the question had come to the Commission on Human Rights a draft international agreement could be prepared either by the conference of government experts to be convened by the Red Cross or by the United Nations General Assembly. The changes made in operative paragraph 5 were aimed at maintaining that latitude. He expressed the hope that the draft would be unanimously adopted.

44. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights) said he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to certain procedural aspects of the work that would be assigned to the Secretary-General if the draft resolutions under consideration were adopted.

45. Operative paragraph 3 (b) of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1 requested that various documents should be transmitted to the International Committee of the Red Cross including the records of discussions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights. Certainly, the pertinent records of the twenty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights could be transmitted to the Red Cross, but the whole of the question of the respect for human rights in

armed conflicts was not on the agenda for the twenty-seventh session of the Commission. That part of the question dealt with in draft resolution A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1 would be placed on the agenda if the draft resolution was adopted. If the General Assembly wished the Commission on Human Rights to consider the Secretary-General's second report (A/8052) before the conference of experts to be convened by the International Committee of the Red Cross met, it would be useful for the report and the pertinent resolution to be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council and, through it, to the Commission on Human Rights.

46. He read out several textual changes which should be made in the French text of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1809/Rev.1. In the third preambular paragraph, the expression "*la valeur persistante*" should be replaced by "*la valeur durable*"; in the sixth preambular paragraph, the word "*suivies*" was to be inserted in the place of "*constantes*"; the tenth preambular paragraph should read "*en temps opportun*" instead of "*à une époque appropriée*"; and the end of operative paragraph 3 (c) should read "*développements nouveaux*" or "*éléments nouveaux*" instead of "*faits nouveaux*".

47. In draft resolution A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1, the Secretary-General was requested to submit a report on the question under consideration to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session, in consultation with the International Committee of the Red Cross and other appropriate international organizations. It was his understanding that in determining the kind of report to submit, the Secretary-General was to follow guidelines which would be furnished to him perhaps by the Commission on Human Rights at its twenty-seventh session.

48. With regard to the remarks made by the representative of France on the Secretary-General's second report (A/8052), he pointed out that paragraph 89 simply presented an excerpt from the text of the Convention in which war correspondents were treated as combatants in so far as the degree of protection was concerned. The expression "war correspondents" might, for the purposes of that Convention, have a more limited meaning than the terms utilized in draft resolution A/C.3/L.1797/Rev.1. The error in paragraph 261 referred to by the representative of France was an error in the French translation, and a corrigendum would be issued. The main reason why the various instruments had been compared in the report was to show what might result from the entry into force of the International Covenants on Human Rights and what was already contained in United Nations instruments that had so far been adopted, most of them unanimously, by Member States. As for what the representative of France had said with regard to paragraph 264, there was no question of treating prisoners of war as persons detained under general law. The intention had merely been to point out that a certain amount of work had been done to ease the situation of detainees in the penal sphere and to suggest that some of the practical measures being contemplated might be made applicable to persons taken prisoner in armed conflicts.

49. Mr. PAOLINI (France) thanked the Director of the Division of Human Rights for his explanations. He was glad

that a corrigendum would be issued in connexion with paragraph 261. He hoped that one would be issued for paragraph 89, which had been drafted in such a way that it seemed to attribute an incorrect meaning to the Convention in question.

50. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights) said that the Secretariat would examine the possibility of rewording the beginning of paragraph 89.

Organization of work

51. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) proposed that, since the Committee had considered only the first three items on its agenda and since the rest of the questions might also prove to be controversial, a number of meetings should immediately be set aside for the consideration of purely social matters, such as the report of the Economic and Social Council and the questions of housing, building and planning, technical assistance in the field of narcotics, and the elderly and the aged, which were also important and to which the Committee should give some attention before it concluded its work. He asked the Secretariat to indicate the maximum number of meetings which could be included on the Committee's calendar and asked the Committee to devote at least ten meetings to the social questions to which he had referred.

52. Miss EDMONDS (United States of America) said that in the year commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, it would be particularly appropriate for the members of the Committee to support the Chairman's efforts to see that consideration was given to all the items on the agenda. The so-called social questions were especially important, and she pointed out that some representatives of non-governmental organizations had told her that they were afraid there would not be enough time for the question of the elderly and the aged to be taken up. It would therefore be a good idea for the Committee to hold more meetings, without modifying its organization of work.

53. Mrs. BARISH (Costa Rica) said that she thought the proposal made by the representative of Pakistan was a constructive one but pointed out that it had been at his suggestion that item 46 had been placed fourth on the agenda (see A/C.3/L.1763). Considering that three weeks had been devoted to the question of youth, the seven meetings set aside for the question of respect for human rights in armed conflicts were a minimum. She therefore hoped that the order adopted would be maintained.

54. Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco) said that she agreed with the representative of Pakistan. Furthermore, she had been surprised at the number of reserve meetings available to the Committee. She asked the Chairman to call on all the members of the Committee to respect the calendar adopted and henceforward to hold meetings regularly twice a day.

55. Mr. M'BENGUE (Senegal) agreed that the work of the Committee was proceeding too slowly but pointed out that the order in which items assigned to the Committee were to be considered had been agreed upon as a compromise proposed by the representative of Pakistan. The slow

progress being made was insufficient reason to change the order of consideration. Experience had shown that even the so-called social questions could be controversial. It would therefore be preferable to stick to what had been decided even if that meant that the Committee would have to hold night meetings.

56. The CHAIRMAN said that an answer would be given at the following meeting to the question asked by the representative of Pakistan concerning the maximum number of meetings which the Committee might hold.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.