



Chairman: Mrs. Helvi SIPILÄ (Finland).

AGENDA ITEM 53

World social situation: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*) (A/8380, A/8403, chap. XV, sect. A; A/C.3/XXVI/CRP.1, E/CN.5/456, E/CN.5/456/Add.1 and Corr.1, Add.2 to 4, Add.5 and Corr.1, Add.6 and 7, Add.8 and Corr.1, Add.9 to 16, A/C.3/L.1853, A/C.3/L.1854)

GENERAL DEBATE (*concluded*)

1. Mr. GOPALLAWA (Ceylon) agreed with the New Zealand representative's remarks (1829th meeting) concerning the need for integrating and balancing economic and social development. Without an integrated approach, many developing countries would continue to be confronted with problems of unemployment, poverty and ill health. Income disparities would increase, the rural exodus would continue, and the rapid population increase would further aggravate those ills. In that connexion he noted that Ceylon had taken steps to promote birth control but had found that it would be necessary to undertake research in that field, emphasizing, where possible, cultural variations, the status of the country's women, and religious and national traditions. No less serious was the problem of youth, which accounted for the bulk of the unemployed; that posed a grave threat to the international community, particularly considering that in the developing countries the labour force would soon exceed 225 million. The unemployment rate was rising as the amount of manpower required for agriculture steadily decreased, while the possibility of switching to non-agricultural employment was very limited in the developing countries. Therefore, one of the main objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade should be to create more employment.

2. The success of efforts to improve the social situation would depend in large part on greater international co-operation; there was no need to repeat what had already been said by many delegations concerning the vast amounts that were being spent on the arms race while the social problem afflicting almost all developing countries were neglected. The gap between the developed and developing countries could be bridged only by concerted and sustained action on the part of the international community. The developed countries should therefore give the developing countries access to world markets. It should also be stressed that there was a scarcity of adequate statistical knowledge relating to the developing countries. That in itself impeded social progress. With adequate statistical data concerning employment, natural resources, health and housing, many

developing countries could plan their development more meaningfully. In that connexion, regional co-operation and co-operation among the developing countries themselves were of the greatest importance.

3. Mrs. KRACHT (Chile) observed that the 1970 *Report on the World Social Situation* was of fundamental interest and constituted a valuable source of information which should be used in implementing the International Development Strategy. It was to be hoped that in forthcoming international meetings such as the third session of UNCTAD which would take place in April 1972 at Santiago, Chile, more positive forms of co-operation with the developing world would be put into effect. The countries of the third world with their backward and dependent economies and their history as victims of colonialism and imperialism could not achieve their social development goals by their own efforts alone. Nor could the desired economic development be achieved if it was not accompanied by social development. That meant that economic progress and the resulting benefits should not be used further to enrich the privileged groups while the great mass of the dispossessed continued to endure poverty and hunger. Economic development without social development gave rise to injustices and frustrations which in turn produced serious imbalances within societies and led ultimately to despair and violence. For that reason it was essential to stress the interrelationship between social and economic development on the basis of social justice.

4. It was apparent from the report that although man prided himself on his great scientific and technological advances he had not been able to alleviate the suffering and the exploitation of peoples and there was more poverty and illiteracy in the world than ever before. The report showed that there were some 783 million illiterates in the world. Forty per cent of the world's female population was completely illiterate. Yet there was a close relationship between *per capita* income and the rate of illiteracy. The situation was seen to be even more alarming when one considered that it had taken Japan, with all its resources, 50 years to wipe out illiteracy. Promoting economic development required not only resources but men and women with the necessary vocational training. All the developing countries were obviously making great efforts to improve their educational programmes, but they were confronted with enormous obstacles. In Latin America, for example, the pressures of poverty were such that 60 to 75 per cent of the children in the region did not complete even their primary schooling.

5. As to the provision and consumption of food-stuffs, figures for the developing countries showed a decline, while those reflecting protein deficiency had risen. It was

recognized that nutritional deficiencies continued to constitute one of the basic causes of ill-health and consequently of low productivity. In the health field, although progress had been made it was insignificant when compared to the magnitude of the existing problems. With reference to housing, it was to be noted that slums had expanded. The number of unemployed persons had steadily increased. Social security programmes were inadequate, coverage being restricted to small groups. In Latin America the existing social security systems protected less than 20 per cent of the economically active population. In that connexion it should be recalled that the Eighth Conference of American States members of the International Labour Organisation held at Ottawa in 1966 had formulated the so-called "Ottawa Programme" which considered, *inter alia*, the possibility of integrating social security programmes with general economic planning, giving top priority to the extension of social security to the rural population, broadening the groups covered by social security, and so forth. Nevertheless, in the majority of the developing countries the process which was known as "social planning" was still for the most part very limited. Real social development planning could be carried out only if incomes in the developing countries considerably increased. Similarly, it was necessary to give a new impetus to international aid under the International Development Strategy. It was also essential to bring about a radical transformation of social and economic structures and increased participation by the people in the formulation of development programmes, which was a prerequisite for planning.

6. The report spoke of "structural dualism", i.e. the growing disparity between higher and lower income groups, between the *élites* and masses. Thus it was not possible to speak of development plans without taking into account the concept of dualism. The report presented a clear picture of the realities of the third world and it should be widely disseminated so that it could awaken people everywhere to the real and urgent problems of many countries throughout the world.

7. Chile was in a period of transition to socialism. That meant that great structural changes were being made, but the process was being carried out constitutionally and legally without prejudice to national traditions and practices under which the people lived together in harmony. The socialist revolution which Chile was carrying out did not prevent it from maintaining friendly relations with all countries. Chile wished to practice peaceful co-existence on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, both political and economic, of all States.

8. Constitutional measures were currently being applied in Chile for the nationalization of copper, the country's fundamental source of wealth. That process of nationalization was being carried out in conformity with the principles and agreements of the United Nations and a unanimous decision of the National Congress. The decision had been taken by Chile as a whole and no force would be allowed to oppose an act of sovereignty. A genuine agrarian reform programme had also been launched: it had already put an end to the system of large landholdings and had freed the peasants from semi-feudal servitude. The National Peasant Council was the body which had been set up to ensure the participation of the peasants in the direction of

agrarian policy. In Chile the policy of social development was closely linked to that of economic development, and both short-term emergency measures and a rational long-term plan had been adopted.

9. Great strides had been made in health and nutrition. Every Chilean child received half a litre of milk daily free of charge and President Allende had said that "the child was the only privileged person in Chile". As mothers and children constituted 60 per cent of Chile's population a Ministry of the Family was being set up which would plan the rational use of all human and material resources with a view to consolidating the family as the basis of society. Chile wanted women to be an integral part of the process of building socialism, but without discrimination and with full respect for their functions and personality.

10. Great attention was also being given to youth, for more than 60 per cent of Chile's population was under 30 years of age. Chilean youth was receiving special attention from the Government and was participating fully in development plans aimed at building socialism in Chile. The full agreement existing between the Government and youth was demonstrated by the growing number of young people who were participating in the voluntary work being done in the fields of health, housing and education.

11. With respect to education, various measures had been taken for the purpose of wiping out illiteracy, achieving a real democratization of education and putting education at the service of the country's needs. Basic compulsory education now covered an eight-year period, which was to be extended to nine. Out-of-school education and the development of mass media of communication were also receiving preferential attention.

12. The report showed that the housing shortage in Latin America totalled some 20 million units. In Chile the figure was more than half a million and it was growing with the increase in the population, urban concentration, the deterioration of housing, the destruction caused by natural catastrophes, and so forth. Accordingly, an emergency housing programme to tackle that problem in the most effective manner had been launched.

13. With respect to labour, the existing co-operation between the Central Única de Trabajadores and the Government would, *inter alia*, make it possible to organize the direct participation of the workers in the management of enterprises in the public and mixed sectors.

14. It was stated in the International Development Strategy that primary responsibility for development in the developing countries lay with those countries themselves but it was also asserted that economic and social progress was the joint and shared responsibility of the entire international community. It was therefore essential that the Governments of the developed countries should carry out their commitments and apply the International Development Strategy in the matter of trade and the transfer of financial and technological resources to the developing countries. If the world social situation was to be improved it was essential to improve international relations and put an end to colonial domination and exploitation, the violation of human rights, racial discrimination and *apart-*

heid, the division of the world into blocs, the squandering of funds on nuclear and conventional weapons and the disparity between affluent and very poor countries. It must be borne in mind that prosperity, peace and international co-operation were closely interrelated and that integrated development should have as its goal the broadening of all man's capabilities, the bettering of the living conditions of peoples and the affirmation of human dignity.

15. Mr. WANG (China) said that his country attached great importance to the implementation of its land reform programme and that in order to make better use of the limited amount of land that could be worked, which was highly fragmented, farm land consolidation had been promoted and by the end of the fiscal year 1971 the area consolidated covered a total of 300,000 hectares. The intention was to consolidate another 200,000 hectares in the next decade and the total would then amount to 55 per cent of the total area of cultivated land. A programme of agricultural mechanization had also been started with a view to increasing the productivity of arable land. The consolidation programme had been extended on a trial basis to a few cities and if the results were encouraging it would be carried further in an effort to improve urban land utilization. To facilitate the exchange of experiences in urban reform, which had been launched in China in 1956, a seminar on urban land policy and land taxation had been held in 1970 under the auspices of the Land Reform Training Institute with the participation of 28 scholars and specialists from eight countries and the results had been very encouraging.

16. With the expansion of the labour insurance programme a year earlier, 911,000 persons had had coverage in respect of sickness, injury, disability, maternity, old age and death in 1970. Vocational training had also been promoted to prepare young people for work in industry and a trial programme for the registration of skilled labour had been introduced in June 1971. The aim of the programme was to help to mobilize skilled labour for the acceleration of economic development. Special emphasis was placed on improving labour-management relations and, to that end, a system of factory councils had been established. Labour disputes were submitted for arbitration by the Ministry of the Interior, which also, from time to time, invited representatives of industry, foreign investors and labour unions to participate in seminars to discuss problems of mutual concern.

17. Community development programmes had been carried out in 1970 with the assistance of the United Nations, thus completing the development of a total of 1,031 communities. Preparations were being made to set up a national academy for research and training on community development with the help of UNDP. In view of the impact of population pressure on economic and social development, every effort was being made to reduce population growth by means of an intensive family planning programme which had proved to be highly successful.

18. At the same time, his Government did not for a moment forget the sad plight of fellow countrymen who now suffered under the rule of the Communist régime and whose living conditions, as a result of the squandering of scarce resources in preparations for war, had deteriorated in

recent years. The difference in the social situation on each side of the Straits of Taiwan proved which policies and programmes best served the interests of the Chinese people.

19. Mr. JANSSON (Director of the Social Development Division) said that the Committee's discussion of the world social situation had been the final stage of a debate on the report which could be divided into four distinct phases. The first had consisted of a technical scrutiny by the Commission for Social Development and, in the case of the chapters concerning Africa, Asia and Latin America, by the regional economic commissions. Secondly, it had been considered by the Economic and Social Council at its fiftieth session, when it had adopted resolution 1581 (L) which had been recommended by the Commission for Social Development. Thirdly, there had been the debate by the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-first session, held at Geneva, in connexion with the items on international economic and social policy and the system of over-all appraisal of progress in implementing the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The report had also been before the Committee for Development Planning, another of the Council's expert bodies, at its seventh session held in March 1971. The Third Committee's debate had therefore been the final stage. In addition, the report was before the Second Committee in connexion with its discussion of the system of review and appraisal of the Second Development Decade.

20. The fact that a large number of delegations had taken part in the debate showed the widespread concern to speed up social progress and achieve social justice and thus held promise for effective implementation of the Strategy. Obviously, it would not be possible to respond to all the points raised. However, with regard to the corrections made by the representative of the United States (1831st meeting) in connexion with chapter VII, it should be pointed out that some of the figures had already been rectified for the printed version, which would appear in about six months' time. Other figures were attributable to the fact that, for practical reasons, the report had been able to take account only of information available by the middle of 1969. For example, the figure of \$1,600 as a guaranteed minimum annual income for a family of four had been correct when the report had been written.

21. There seemed to be broad agreement on the conclusions summarized in the introduction to the report (E/CN.5/456) although, clearly, complete agreement on all the issues involved was not possible. The question of the content and meaning of development, raised by some delegations, was one on which views differed widely. In the United Nations, the concept of development was reflected in the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade, in the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and in Economic and Social Council resolution 1139 (XLI), which had been adopted at the time of the reassessment of the role and functions of the Commission for Social Development. Moreover, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly had requested a study on a unified approach to development analysis and planning, one which had been mentioned frequently in the course of the debate. Very briefly, it could be said that, in the report, development was regarded as embodying an increase in the national product and the

raising of levels of living, the adoption of new technology and the acquisition of new skills and capacities, an equitable distribution of the benefits of development and participation in it, occupational change, reforms in social and economic structures and the establishment of the institutions needed for the progress of societies. It could be summed up, perhaps in simplistic terms, as "growth plus change". The Committee had agreed that economic, social, political and cultural factors were interrelated and that, consequently, a unified approach was needed for the treatment of problems of development.

22. As to the methodology of future reports, some countries had felt that the current report contained too much statistical and not enough qualitative information. On the other hand, others would like the report to consist mainly of basic data. It should be noted that the data gathered in decennial censuses and in sample surveys, as well as other statistical information, had been published annually in the *Demographic Yearbook* and the *Statistical Yearbook*. The 1963 *Report on the World Social Situation* and that of 1967 had each been accompanied by a *Compendium of Social Statistics* of 600 or more pages. A new compendium had not been issued since 1967 because its publication would not be warranted until adequate information was received from new censuses, which were conducted roughly every 10 years. Furthermore, if the report was confined to a review of statistical trends as reflected in censuses, it would exclude important trends in development which could not be expressed in quantitative terms and would provide little information on vital aspects of qualitative changes. The scope and methodology of the report were based on experience gained over a period of 20 years, since the publication of the 1952 *Report on the World Social Situation*, the first such report, which was prepared on the initiative of France.

23. The 1970 report undoubtedly suffered from shortcomings but it was obviously not possible to satisfy everybody. The aim had not been to please readers or to produce a document that would be evaluated or judged as an academic study, but rather to furnish a working tool that would facilitate policy-making.

24. The views expressed in the Committee were a useful reminder that no effort should be spared to continue to obtain and analyse more meaningful data. The various resolutions setting out guidelines for the preparation of the report also called for an analysis of the causes of underdevelopment and an assessment of the real impact upon society of governmental action and the problems of the development process. It was a demanding task and the resources available were unfortunately meagre. It should be noted that the regional chapters were prepared by a very small group whose members also had other responsibilities and showed great dedication to their work. Perhaps the main contribution of the report was that it served as a reminder that progress and development were valid and desirable only if they genuinely contributed to peace and the betterment of society.

25. In his view, quantifiable data should be used whenever they were available and were relevant to long-term social trends. At the same time, non-statistical qualitative analyses must be used if the report was to enable the Economic and

Social Council and the General Assembly to make meaningful policy recommendations. In that regard, it was important to devise a data collection system at the country level to facilitate the compilation, for analytical purposes, of integrated economic, social, political and cultural information, that question was now being dealt with by the team working on the report on a unified approach and efforts were also being made to find ways of measuring changes and progress at the local level, a matter which some speakers had emphasized. At its fifty-first session the Economic and Social Council had discussed the problem of indicators to monitor progress during the Second Development Decade and it had been agreed that further work should be done, pending a final decision on the whole system by the General Assembly. Naturally, the results of that work would also be used in preparing the next report on the world social situation.

26. Some representatives had referred to the need to review the criteria applied in grouping countries by regions. Much thought had been given to that problem in the past two years and a review had been initiated, taking into account all relevant comments. Several speakers had referred to the point, mentioned in the introduction to the report, that economic and social policy should be considered in the United Nations by a single body. The Economic and Social Council had already taken an important step in that direction by adopting resolution 1621 C (LI) in which it had decided to establish a 54-member committee for the review and appraisal of progress in the Second Development Decade. The Council had also assigned the Commission for Social Development a clear role in the appraisal, and the social side of development would therefore be well represented.

27. A number of delegations had referred to the problems of youth and to the importance of the full integration of women into economic and social life. Special reports on those questions were being prepared by the Secretariat and would be available in 1972.

28. The need for structural reform, particularly agrarian reform, and the use of co-operatives had been emphasized by many representatives. The Economic and Social Council would have before it in May 1972 a report on land reform recommending further action programmes to speed up such reform, which in many cases existed only on paper. The report would be prepared on the basis of the work of a joint FAO/United Nations/ILO *Ad Hoc* Committee, which had discussed those problems in all regions of the world. It was essential to emphasize that the "green revolution" must not be used as an excuse to hold back land reform; indeed, that it would be ineffective if it were not accompanied by structural reforms. He drew attention in that respect to Economic and Social Council resolution 1645 (LI), in which it was decided, *inter alia*, that a review and appraisal of progress in the application of the new technology should be made at the mid-term of the Second United Nations Development Decade. A report on the development of co-operatives during the Second Development Decade, which would form part of the Co-operative Development Decade proclaimed by the International Co-operative Alliance, would also be put before the Economic and Social Council. It should be recalled in that connexion that Economic and Social Council resolution 1581 A (L),

considering it appropriate to study the experience of Member States in achieving far-reaching social and economic changes for purposes of social progress, asked the Secretary-General to send those States a questionnaire on the subject. That would meet some of the suggestions made in the Committee regarding a wider exchange of information between countries with different economic, political and social systems. Furthermore, such an exchange was constantly taking place through seminars and meetings in different parts of the world, organized by the various United Nations agencies.

29. There seemed to be general agreement on the need for effective policies to solve the problems of unemployment and under-employment, even though the ways of providing employment were bound to vary from one country to another depending on their respective social and economic systems. At the 1828th meeting, the representative of Egypt had referred to his (Mr. Jansson's) statement that there had been a tendency in the past to think that unemployment problems as symptoms of under-development would disappear as economic growth proceeded. What he had meant by that assertion was that Western economic models which made that assumption were not necessarily helpful in solving the employment problem in developing countries.

30. A number of delegations had referred to the problem of colonialism. It was pertinent to mention that Economic and Social Council resolution 1581 B (L) recommended that in the preparation of future reports, due account should be taken of the social situation in colonial and dependent territories.

31. While the subject of the human environment, to which some speakers had alluded, had not been accorded a separate chapter in the report, there were references to it throughout the text. Furthermore, it would be discussed exhaustively at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment to be held at Stockholm in 1972.

32. It had been stated, too, that the report should have contained conclusions and recommendations. That had been done in the case of the 1967 report, but there had been no instructions to do so again in the report for 1970. In Council resolution 1581 B (L), however, it was recommended that future reports should draw conclusions and make suggestions. That requirement would be difficult to fulfil, owing to the diversity of the subject matter covered by the report and to the financial difficulties currently being experienced by the United Nations. It might, however, be accomplished if the specialized agencies in their spheres of competence and highly qualified experts lent their full co-operation to United Nations personnel.

33. In conclusion, he said that when future reports were prepared, everything possible would be done to reflect the ideas put forward during the debates in the Third Committee. He agreed with the representative who had said that the task of preparing those reports must be a continuing one. That posed many problems for a secretariat with limited staff and an abundance of other tasks. In future reports, every effort would be made to provide an integrated analysis of social trends and conditions in their relationship to economic, political and cultural conditions

and policies. The results of the study on unified development would be very useful in that connexion. The report showed a certain unevenness, mainly because the various parts were prepared by a number of organizations in the United Nations system, in particular the specialized agencies and the regional economic commissions. Some unevenness was inevitable, despite the fact that for each report there had been a detailed outline of the contents. At any rate, everything possible was being done to refine the tools for development analysis. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the programme of recurrent publications of the United Nations (see A/8362)¹ stated that according to Governments polled through a questionnaire, the *Report on the World Social Situation* was the most important of 84 recurrent publications of the United Nations. The Organization could not prepare monographs on the development of individual countries, but it was to be hoped that the reports on the world social situation would continue to serve as essential tools in the formulation of international policies.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

34. Mr. CALOVSKI (Yugoslavia), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/L.1853, announced that Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru and Zambia had become sponsors of that draft resolution.

35. Certain changes should be made in the text. In the fourth preambular paragraph the words "as described in the 1970 report" should be deleted. In operative paragraph 4 the words "alien domination" should be added after the word "*apartheid*". In operative paragraph 6, after the words "embodied in the Strategy" the comma should be deleted and the words "and, where possible, to exceed these targets" should be added. He wished to make it clear that although the sponsors had done their best, the draft was not final; they hoped it could be improved by the suggestions and comments of other delegations. All the sponsors were developing countries, which was why the draft resolution reflected the developing countries' views. In that connexion, he thanked delegations which had drawn attention to points of interest. The main concern of the developing countries, as emerged clearly from the draft was the deterioration of the social situation in the world. The major barrier to development was constituted by policies of oppression and exploitation and that fact should be stressed. While it was true that the developing countries were primarily responsible for their own development, they could not attain their objectives if the other countries were hindering their efforts. In that connexion, the sovereignty of each country over its natural resources should be emphasized. That was the main conclusion of the sponsors of the draft resolution, which he hoped would be adopted by the Committee.

36. Miss GROZA (Romania) observed that the report outlined the many problems affecting such matters as education, vocational training and health in different parts of the world, as well as the obstacles which were preventing young people from participating in development and solving those problems. The importance of the participation

¹ Document pertaining to agenda item 83, issued separately (offset).

of young people was being increasingly recognized, as was the need for intensifying efforts to solve the problems of young people and to foster in them the spirit of peace, social justice, and co-operation among peoples and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In 1972 the General Assembly would have before it the in-depth analytical study on the world social situation of youth requested in General Assembly resolution 2497 (XXIV). The Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples had been adopted in 1965 on the initiative of a large number of countries, including Romania; it was necessary at the present stage to review the implementation of that Declaration. Thus the delegations of Austria, Bulgaria, Indonesia, Iran, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Romania, Senegal and the Ukrainian Soviet

Socialist Republic had submitted draft resolution A/C.3/L.1854, the sub-title of which was "Youth, its problems, its needs and its participation in social development". The delegations of Guinea, Kenya, Peru and Yugoslavia had also become sponsors.

37. It seemed superfluous to dwell on the need to adopt that draft resolution, under the terms of which it would be possible in the following year to hold a detailed and constructive discussion on the problems of youth. Her delegation was aware that the text could be improved and would welcome suggestions from other delegations to that end.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.