



Chairman: Mrs. Helvi SIPILÄ (Finland).

AGENDA ITEM 54

Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (*continued*) (A/8367, A/8403, chap. XVII, sects. B and F; A/8418, A/8439):

- (a) International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination: report of the Secretary-General;
- (b) Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
- (c) Status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: report of the Secretary-General

GENERAL DEBATE

1. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director of the Division of Human Rights) said that on its twenty-fifth anniversary the United Nations had unanimously paid tribute to the work of the Third Committee and had assigned it goals for the future which were difficult but undoubtedly necessary, if the condition of humanity was to be decisively improved, both for the well-being of the community and for the full self-realization of the individual.

2. The importance of the question of racial discrimination had been stressed by many representatives at the beginning of the present session when the Committee had discussed the organization of its work. It would be recalled, in the last months of the year, that the General Assembly had proclaimed 1971 as International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

3. The problem of racial discrimination had clearly figured among the major concerns of the United Nations since its foundation. Non-discrimination was one of the principles enunciated in the Charter; the purpose of the decisions taken since then had been to restate the principle and define it more clearly. Among other important resolutions, the General Assembly had adopted two international instruments of universally recognized significance and scope: the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Throughout the Organization's existence, the general and global aspect of the phenomenon of racial discrimination, and at the same time its particular manifestations, might be said to have remained in the forefront of its preoccupations. In the introduction to his latest report on the work of the Organization (A/8401/Add.1, para. 283) the Secretary-General had said that racial discrimination was harmful to those who suffered it and to

those who practised it; he had expressed the hope that the manifold activities called for by the General Assembly to mark the observance of the International Year would move Governments and peoples to strike a final blow at what was one of the great ills of the present time and an impediment to public order, economic and social development, and harmony in relations among nations.

4. Those words had confirmed a well-established doctrine of the United Nations. As early as its first session, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 103 (I), on racial persecution and discrimination. Among other solemn affirmations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, had laid down the principle that all human beings were born free and equal in dignity and rights and that all were entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of the Declaration. From then on, no one speaking with the voice of international authority could publicly deny those affirmations, which constituted one of the moral precepts of the century. At its fifteenth session, at which it had adopted such historic instruments as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the General Assembly, on the initiative of the Third Committee, had also adopted resolution 1510 (XV), which had resolutely condemned all manifestations and practices of racial, religious and national hatred in the political, economic, social, educational and cultural spheres as violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and had called upon all States to take the necessary measures to prevent such manifestations. The conjunction of those two resolutions was important, because the General Assembly had been quick to see the link between colonialism and the persistence of racialism; two years later, it had adopted resolution 1850 (XVII), in which it had expressed the view that racial discrimination and segregation in Non-Self-Governing Territories could best be eradicated by the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. At the following session, it had unanimously adopted a fundamental instrument, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. An interesting feature of resolution 1904 (XVIII), in which the General Assembly had proclaimed the Declaration, was that the Members of the United Nations had unanimously stated that any doctrine of racial differentiation or superiority was scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous; and that they had reaffirmed that the building of a world society free from all forms of racial segregation and discrimination was one of the fundamental objectives of the United Nations. Those statements had been included in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted by the General Assembly

in resolution 2106 A (XX)—again unanimously—and opened for signature and ratification on 21 December 1965.

5. In the International Year, it was important to emphasize the insistence of the United Nations on the question of the elimination of racism; it was reflected not only in the international instruments he had cited but in virtually every decision of the Organization having any normative significance in the social and humanitarian field, such as the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

6. It would be recalled that the periodical consideration of the item concerning the question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which had been proceeding for some years in the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council and, on occasions, the General Assembly, related especially to policies of racial discrimination and segregation and of *apartheid*. It was interesting to note in that connexion that, in the United Nations, the problem of the elimination of racial discrimination had ceased from the outset to be considered solely in the narrow and traditional framework of human rights, since it had been realized that discrimination on the ground of race, colour or ethnic origin was an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among nations and could not only upset the harmonious coexistence of men within a State but also disturb international peace and security.

7. The General Assembly had expressed a similar idea as early as its fifth session, in resolution 377 (V). At the opening meeting of the International Conference on Human Rights held at Teheran in 1968, the Secretary-General had said that racial conflict, if it could not be curbed and finally eliminated, would grow into a destructive monster compared to which the religious or ideological conflicts of the past would seem like small family quarrels.¹

8. The link that existed between the efforts to combat racial discrimination and the objectives of the United Nations in the field of economic and social development had been clearly established in the resolutions underlying the Organization's activities in that field. In resolution 2586 (XXIV), the General Assembly had expressed the opinion that, in the elaboration of the strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, the final aim must be the attainment of a rapid and sustained rate of economic and social development and also the well-being, freedom and dignity of all human beings and the enjoyment of all the rights recognized by the Universal Declaration and guaranteed by the two International Covenants on Human Rights. In the preamble to the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, the success of the strategy had been specifically associated with the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of equal political, economic, social and cultural rights for all members of society (see General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV), sect. A, para. (5)). Furthermore, the General Assembly, having specified various

objectives, and in particular that of ensuring that all should enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, had proclaimed, by its resolution 2544 (XXIV), an International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The general considerations and specific condemnations which pointed to the dangers of racial discrimination and its inhuman and obnoxious character had proved insufficient. It should be remembered that, by virtue of the General Assembly resolution, the International Year had been devoted to combating all forms and manifestations of racial discrimination and to international solidarity with all who were fighting racism.

9. The Secretary-General's report (A/8367) contained much information on the results achieved and on the measures and activities undertaken and to come. Although it would be premature to try to assess the Year and its effect before it ended, it was already clear that considerable effort had been made, that the initial results were promising and that lasting achievements could be expected. The report which the Secretary-General would submit to the Assembly at its twenty-seventh session would doubtless give a fuller picture of the specific measures and activities to which the International Year had given rise.

10. In the light of the existing international structures, the most effective action was clearly at the national level, although the part played by international bodies should not be under-estimated. The prime needs were to awaken the interest of all whose help was necessary, in particular those who were not victims of discrimination to encourage them to combat the discrimination suffered by others and to invite them to cease their passive role and, in full awareness of the problem, to behave and act in a manner calculated to help the struggle against racism. In that respect, the report of the Secretary-General and the other information available showed how rulers, organizations and eminent personalities had responded to the General Assembly's suggestions and launched appeals to their citizens for action. Taken as a whole, those appeals undoubtedly represented a further solemn affirmation of faith in the dignity and value of human beings and a renewed expression by international society of its abhorrence of fascism and everything that racial discrimination involved. They had been accompanied by calls from officials of the organizations of the United Nations system and related organizations. Those messages had been publicized through the mass media and in educational institutions. In addition, other activities had been undertaken to mobilize public opinion, from the organization of solemn parliamentary sessions to the issue of special stamps and the dissemination of the symbol approved by the Secretary-General for the International Year. In that context, consideration should be given to the organization of a special meeting of the General Assembly on the International Year, as envisaged in paragraph (a) of suggestion B of the programme for the celebration of the Year,² an idea to which the attention of the President of the General Assembly had already been drawn. Such a meeting could be the occasion for a solemn appeal to all peoples of the world to intensify their efforts, nationally and internationally, to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination as rapidly as possible.

¹ See *Final act of the International Conference on Human Rights* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.XIV.2), annex II B.

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session Annexes*, agenda item 55, document A/7649.

11. The resolutions and other instruments of the United Nations stressed the importance of legislative and administrative measures and also of judicial decisions in putting an end to or keeping down racial discrimination in both the political and the economic, social and cultural spheres. Information submitted by Governments attested the relationship between national policies and international action. Many Governments had submitted information on constitutional provisions and laws promulgated for the purpose of eliminating discrimination; it seemed, moreover, that before ratifying the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, many States had wished to adapt their own legislation to ensure that they complied with the provisions of the Convention. The number of ratifications and accessions to the Convention had increased during the current year and stood at present at 54. It was nevertheless necessary to repeat once again that the Convention would only become the basic legal instrument of the United Nations in the struggle against racial discrimination when all the members of the international community had ratified it. Some States had declared that they hoped to ratify the Convention shortly, and the Secretary-General had expressed the hope that those ratifications would be forthcoming before the end of the International Year. The same request appeared in operative paragraph 3 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1588 (L).

12. The Convention had entered into force on 4 January 1969; the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination established under the Convention had started functioning in January 1970. The Secretary-General had already called on all the parties to the Convention to re-elect or elect half of the members of the Committee in January, as laid down in the Convention.

13. In accordance with article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention, the Committee had submitted its second report (A/8418), which made it clear that in considering the reports submitted to the Committee by the parties the Committee had tried to ensure that the reports would enable it to fulfil its task, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. The Committee had exercised its right to request further information from Governments. As was natural in applying a new convention or a new system of implementing international obligations for the first time, the Committee had had to deal with many interpretations of the Convention, and to consider its competence and its role vis-à-vis the General Assembly, the bodies responsible for the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples—with which it had co-operated under article 15 of the Convention—and the States Members of the United Nations which were not yet parties to the Convention. The Committee had also considered the possibility of co-operating with specialized agencies such as the ILO and UNESCO. It had likewise to solve the problem of disseminating the information it received or the data concerning its work.

14. Article 9 of the Convention referred to legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures. "Other" measures included the study of the causes of the persistence of racial discrimination in spite of the fact that it had been condemned by the highest public and religious authorities, and the consideration of measures to eliminate discrimi-

nation, particularly through education and the information media. The importance of that kind of measure was clear from the fact that in spite of all the measures already adopted, discrimination persisted in some cases because of economic factors, in others because of social factors and in others again because of political factors.

15. Thus there was a need to study above all the basis of the phenomenon, as was provided for in the programme of the International Year. The Commission on Human Rights had undertaken to carry out that exhaustive study with the help of its Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. For that purpose it had at its disposal the excellent study³ on racial discrimination in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres prepared by Mr. Santa Cruz. The report and the conclusions it contained had been examined by the Sub-Commission in the summer of 1970 and by the Commission in March 1971. The latter had adopted a number of resolutions advocating a kind of mobilization of all international forces against racism, which had been referred to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly.⁴

16. The Economic and Social Council had submitted its conclusions in resolution 1588 (L) on racial discrimination in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres, in resolution 1589 (L) on the problem of indigenous populations, and in resolution 1591 (L) on the policies of *apartheid* and racial discrimination.

17. He further recalled that, as indicated in suggestion B(c) of the programme for the International Year,² a new United Nations programme had been initiated as originally contemplated in resolution VII⁵ of the International Conference on Human Rights at Teheran, under which the Secretary-General would periodically prepare reports summarizing the information in the studies undertaken by the specialized agencies, UNITAR and other international bodies and also by private institutions and specialists interested in such matters. The reports would be communicated to the relevant United Nations bodies, Governments and interested institutions for use when relevant matters and their own activities were being considered. Such studies and analyses would include the world seminar on measures to be taken on the national level for the implementation of United Nations instruments aimed at combating and eliminating racial discrimination and for the promotion of harmonious race relations. Under the more general description of "evils of racial discrimination", those measures had been discussed at that human rights seminar held within the framework of the Advisory Services in the field of human rights at Yaoundé (Cameroon). The report on the seminar had been available to the Commission;⁶ it summarized the comments of the participants and some of the conclusions adopted. But the report might not have indicated sufficiently clearly the high quality of the contributions made by almost all the

³ *Racial Discrimination* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.71.XIV.2).

⁴ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 4*, chap. II.

⁵ See *Final act of the International Conference on Human Rights* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.68.XIV.2), p. 18.

⁶ Document ST/TAO/HR/42.

participants, nor did it give a proper account of the expressions of gratitude—which he would like to reiterate—to the Government of Cameroon.

18. Another seminar had been held in France on the dangers of a recrudescence of intolerance in all its forms and the search for ways of preventing and combating it. The report on that seminar had not yet appeared, since it had been held from 24 August to 6 September 1971.⁷ Because of lack of time and differences of opinion on some aspects of the problem of the recrudescence of intolerance, there had been no unanimity on the conclusions. In his view, the problem lay in the fact that the idea of tolerance, as referred to both in the Charter and in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, was one on which agreement as to interpretation and application was not easy to reach at world level in the current troubled times and which would require further deliberations to probe its deeper meaning and to circumscribe it. He also wished to thank the French Government and the Nice municipal authorities again for the welcome they had given the participants.

19. It was recognized more and more that education was one of the basic factors in the struggle against racism. Principles should be inculcated in children to immunize them against racial prejudice and help them adopt an outlook in keeping with the requirements of a society based on understanding between the various ethnic groups it comprised. Education also consisted of making young people understand that discrimination was a feeling of racial superiority which was a dangerous myth neither scientifically nor morally acceptable. To achieve that, specific measures were required at all levels of education. In that connexion it was relevant to point out that UNESCO devoted special attention to the task of preparing teaching methods designed to combat effectively the manifestation or persistence of racial prejudice.

20. The function of information was no less important, since it was by that means that the general public could be educated in the principle and practice of non-discrimination and made to understand the danger of discrimination. That was without any doubt a tremendous task, and to carry it out it would be essential to use all available means of communication at both the national and the international level. The report of the Secretary-General (A/8367) summarized the measures adopted by the United Nations information services to bring out the importance of the International Year in its publications and provide material for public information media throughout the world so as to ensure the widest possible publicity for the International Year.

21. The non-governmental organizations had shown initiative and imagination in conceiving and carrying out their special programmes of celebrations and activities. Chapter VI of the report supplied information on those activities, which had been described in more detail in the International Year Newsletter. The annex to the report listed organizations which had kept the Secretary-General informed of their activities. The list revealed the response to the appeals of the General Assembly for participation by

interested organizations. To judge by the information received, it could be said at once that the activities of the non-governmental organizations had made a considerable contribution to informing the public of the evils of racism and racial discrimination. The Secretary-General thanked the organizations for all that had been done during the year and for what it was proposed to do, since clearly the vast task of eliminating racial discrimination could not be completed in one year. The programme of the Year included in its proposed objectives the formulation and preparation of a programme of new measures to be applied after the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had ended.

22. It had also been suggested that the efforts made during the Year to mobilize international resources should be continued. It should be noted in that connexion that Economic and Social Council resolution 1588 (L) recommended that the General Assembly should request every competent United Nations organ, specialized agency, regional intergovernmental organization and non-governmental organization to consider at future sessions the following matters: the further action which could be taken with a view to speedily eliminating racial discrimination throughout the world; the action which could be recommended to subsidiary organs, to States and to international and national bodies for that purpose; and the follow-up measures required to ensure the full and effective implementation of its decisions in that matter. The Council had further recommended that the General Assembly should undertake a world-wide programme intended to build up public opinion, especially through radio and television broadcasts, as well as through the distribution of appropriate literature, with a view to eradicating once and for all false racist beliefs based upon a lack of scientific knowledge. It had also recommended that the General Assembly should urge all States concerned to accelerate economic and social development of their minority groups with a view to eliminating *de facto* discrimination occasioned by their low standard of living and that it should urge competent organs of the United Nations and specialized agencies to extend their full co-operation, including technical and financial assistance where appropriate, to enable the States concerned to achieve that objective. In the same resolution the Council stressed the importance of the participation of people in the process of economic and social development of countries and in its benefits as the basis for the actual realization of fundamental rights and freedoms and the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination.

23. It should also be noted that in resolution 1588 (L) the Council had invited the International Labour Organisation and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to provide the Commission on Human Rights with reports, at three-year intervals, on the nature and effect of any racial discrimination, especially in southern Africa, of whose existence they had knowledge in their sphere of competence. It had also invited all non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council to supply information biennially on the progress made in the struggle against racism, *apartheid* and racial discrimination, especially in southern Africa.

24. The Secretary-General was invited to co-ordinate the activities undertaken during the Year and to report on their

⁷ Subsequently issued under the symbol ST/TAO/HR/44.

results to the General Assembly. He hoped that his review of the progress to date of the activities undertaken during the Year, together with the recommendations of other organs of the United Nations, would help the Committee in its work at the current session. It was perhaps difficult for those who abhorred racial discrimination and the injustice which it entailed to analyse that phenomenon impartially and to consider programmes designed to provide a long-term solution to the problem. Nevertheless, that was what had to be done at the international level. It was to be hoped that the International Year would be a landmark in the struggle against racism and would help to reduce racism to a shameful memory of the past. In its desire to combat racism and racial discrimination, the international community had made 1971 a year characterized by demonstrations of its determination to take action against any form of racial discrimination and to promote the greatest possible understanding between all the peoples of the world. No effort, however small, was insignificant, for they all reflected the desire of men of goodwill to combat the injustices created by racism. Those efforts, however, would not be successful unless they affected all mankind. Above all, efforts were being made on behalf of the victims of racism, wherever they might be, but especially those from southern Africa. The purpose of those efforts was to show those who were actively fighting and those who were obliged to suffer in silence that the peoples of the United Nations were doing their utmost to put an end to their subjection to the despicable policy of discrimination based on the colour of a man's skin.

25. The efforts of the United Nations were also directed towards those living in freedom and enjoying human rights; it was to be hoped that the rights enjoyed by such people would enable them to provide effective assistance to the victims of racism. No opportunity should be neglected at the local, national or international level to demonstrate appreciation of freedom and to oppose those who would deny it. There must be no undertaking too difficult for those who would put an end to racism. Lastly, the efforts of the United Nations were directed, most assuredly, towards those who made the observance of an International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination necessary: towards those who paid no heed to the appeals of other members of the human race or to the provisions of resolutions adopted in the name of human dignity. It was apparent that the International Year would not see the end of those shameful practices; nevertheless, it should serve to stimulate a heightened awareness of the situation and a desire to take a firm stand. The fact that the Year had been proclaimed and had been welcomed gave reason to hope that it would not be in vain.

26. Mr. PAPADEMAS (Cyprus) and Mrs. BARISH (Costa Rica) congratulated the Director of the Division of Human Rights on his lucid and enlightening statement and requested that it should be fully reflected in the summary record.

27. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, drew attention to the armed assault committed the previous evening against the Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. He also drew attention to other incidents, such as the incursion of an individual into the plenary meeting of the General Assembly that

morning, when it had been considering the question of China, and to the fact that that person had been one of those who had taken part in the invasion of the Syrian Mission on 5 October 1966. There had also been further aggression against the Soviet Mission that very morning. A few days earlier he had found on his table an insulting note bearing the star of David. The building which housed his country's delegation had been repeatedly attacked and threatened.

28. All those acts were interrelated and were aimed at diverting the General Assembly's attention from real issues to false ones. The real issues were the occupation, aggression and racism practised by Israel and the false issues were the progress and development of Israel and the oppression of the Jews in Syria. There was a veritable deluge of propaganda emanating from the city of New York which defamed Syria and claimed to defend the Jews living in Syria.

29. The time had come for the Committee to speak out and to condemn indignantly such acts, for if it did not do so any discussion of humanitarian principles would be meaningless.

30. Mrs. ESHEL-SHOHAM (Israel) reiterated her country's unequivocal opposition to any form of discrimination, especially that based on race. The people of Israel had suffered the longest and most cruel history of persecution based on racial prejudice. It was therefore with indignation that her delegation witnessed the continued denial of human rights to millions of people in the continent of Africa because of policies of racism and discrimination.

31. The battle against racial discrimination had to be waged on many fronts, and the most important was on the battlefield of men's minds. Discrimination must be attacked at the roots and thereby prevented. Knowing the terrible consequences of racial discrimination for any society, her Government had welcomed the opportunity afforded by the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination to express by every possible means its solidarity in the struggle against racism in all its forms and has used the information media and public, educational, trade union and other gatherings to provide a forum for the discussion of racism and the lessons to be learned from it. Moreover, textbooks in Israel were kept under constant scrutiny to ensure they were in conformity with international standards and would not create any form of prejudice in the minds of pupils.

32. Her delegation commended the Secretariat of the United Nations for the role it had played in the struggle against racial discrimination throughout the world.

33. She went on to draw attention to the grave plight of the Jews in the Soviet Union and pointed out that, in accordance with Soviet philosophy and within the framework of the Soviet constitution, ethnic groups, no matter how small they might be, enjoyed full facilities for educating their children in their own language and for developing their special culture and traditions. Only the Jews were deprived of the right to use their language for instructional purposes, to learn their own history and to develop their culture and civilization. They were not only

denied educational and communal institutions but it was even considered an anti-Soviet activity to possess works on Jewish history, a picture postcard of the Jewish State or books in Hebrew. Although the Soviet régime recognized the Jews as a nation and the Jewish nationality of citizens was indicated on their identity cards, they were not even allowed to learn their language, which is one of the criteria for determining nationality. She quoted from a document produced by Soviet prosecutors in the recent trials of Jewish citizens in the Soviet Union, in which a young Jew described the confused situation with regard to his mother tongue. In order to survive, the Jews in the Soviet Union had to renounce their existence as Jews and deny themselves contact with other Jews.

34. One of the basic rights of a national minority was the right to choose to live with its own people. At one time the Soviet Union had recognized the special affinity between the Jews and Israel; in proof of that assertion she quoted a statement made by Mr. Gromyko in the United Nations General Assembly on 14 May 1947 and a statement made by Mr. Tsarapkin on 13 October 1947.

35. The case of the Armenians was closely related to that of the Jews. The Soviet Union had encouraged Armenians born in all corners of the earth to rebuild their ancient homeland in Soviet Armenia. It might be asked why the same right was denied to the Jews.

36. The situation which she described was fully documented: there were hundreds of letters signed by thousands of Jews expressing their desire to leave the Soviet Union and to live as Jews in their homeland. In the past year there had been a series of trials of Jews in various parts of the Soviet Union. Scores of men and women had been tried and sentenced for no other crime but their wish to fulfil that aspiration. Numbers of petitions, appeals and requests had been submitted by Jews in the Soviet Union which clearly demonstrated their desires and their aspirations.

37. There were 41 Jewish political prisoners in Soviet concentration camps who had been sentenced solely for their determination to go to Israel. The previous week a 26-year-old man had been sentenced to three and a half years of hard labour in a concentration camp just because he had had in his possession some Hebrew poems by Bialik and a letter to the Soviet authorities, signed by himself and several other Jews, requesting exit permits.

38. She wished to make it clear that those people refused to become "cosmopolites" and had nothing against the régime of the Soviet Union or against the Soviet Government. They simply wanted to emigrate to Israel, the homeland of the Jewish people, where they could be united with their fellow Jews to shape a common future. She wished also to stress that it had never been maintained that all Soviet Jews wished to emigrate to Israel: it was known, however, that there were on file about 70,000 applications by Soviet Jews for exit permits to Israel. It was fortunate that a small number of Jews had succeeded in leaving, but it was regrettable that they had first been subjected to harassment. Once a person applied for an exit permit, he was dismissed from work, ousted from the university, vilified by neighbours and condemned to live long years of precarious existence in an atmosphere envenomed by official rancour, until he was permitted to leave.

39. In 1966 Premier Kosygin had said that everything possible would be done to allow Jews to emigrate to Israel. The same statement had been repeated by him in Ottawa on the preceding day. Her delegation hoped that the Soviet Union would keep that promise and it appealed to the Soviet authorities to permit the Jews who wanted to emigrate to leave peacefully and to come and live in Israel as Jews.

40. Mrs. MIRONOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, deplored Israel's habit of using the United Nations rostrum to attack the Soviet Union. Hooligans were punished in the Soviet Union; that was not the case in other countries. Israel's allegations were false and clearly did not deserve the slightest consideration. Their purpose was obvious: to divert attention from Israel's dubious activities in the occupied Arab territories and from the subversive activities of international Zionism.

41. The Zionists paraded in the streets to denounce an alleged "Jewish question" in the Soviet Union. Such tactics were calculated to deceive the public. It was sufficient to read the Constitution of the Soviet Union and to analyse the Leninist principles on which it was based to realize that the allegation was false. There were many peoples and nationalities in the Soviet Union who lived together in harmony in accordance with the principles of the Russian revolution, which abhorred discrimination of any kind. Soviet society condemned every type of racism, including anti-semitism, and the Jews in the Soviet Union enjoyed the same rights and privileges as all other citizens, were engaged in every type of occupation and employment, occupied high positions and generally participated fully in all aspects of Soviet life. Furthermore, the works of Jewish authors were freely translated. Those truths had been reaffirmed on numerous occasions by Soviet Jews both individually and collectively. The campaign against the Soviet Union in the name of the Jewish question was an insult to Soviet Jews.

42. With regard to the Syrian representative's accusation, he pointed out that the Soviet delegation was helpless in the face of the campaign launched against it by Zionist elements, in particular the Jewish Defence League, which made free use of radio and television services to discredit the Soviet Union, and employed physical force to carry out attacks on the Soviet Mission and other Soviet premises. The previous week the lives of Soviet citizens had been threatened in a radio broadcast. The previous day the residence of a member of his delegation had been fired on. It should be established beyond doubt that the representative of Israel was making her slanderous attacks to cover up those activities, which were the work of international Zionism, and to conceal her country's Fascist and militarist policies.

43. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia), speaking on a point of order, observed that the Israeli representative's statement should have been ruled out of order since it had dealt with religious discrimination and not racial discrimination; what she had said might perhaps be pertinent when the Committee took up agenda item 60. Judaism was a religion and it was as unthinkable to talk of the Jews as a race as it would be absurd to speak of the Catholic race, the Parsee race or the Buddhist race. There were Jews who were

neither Zionists nor Israeli citizens. If the Zionists wished to brainwash the Soviet Jews into adopting their doctrine, the latter could scarcely be blamed for resisting.

44. Of 16 million Jews, barely half a million were said to be Zionists. It would not be fair to blame all Jews throughout the world for acts perpetrated by a single group. There were too many problems generated by racial discrimination for the Committee to attempt to deal at the same time with problems relating to religious intolerance. Nor was the Committee the proper forum to discuss the Palestine question: at the present time it was considering the question of racial discrimination. He therefore hoped that members would not make statements for the sole purpose of uttering tendentious propaganda. Only those members who wished to express their views on racial discrimination should speak and those who intended to talk about religious intolerance should remain silent. He wished to know, furthermore, whether the next speaker was going to address himself to the item under discussion by the Committee.

45. The CHAIRMAN said that she was not in a position to answer that question. She suggested that members who wished to exercise the right of reply should wait until the end of the meeting to do so.

46. Mrs. HAMM-RIJSDIJK (Netherlands) recalled that in 1970 one delegation had referred to the historical links between the Netherlands and South Africa and had assumed that because of those links the Netherlands was unwilling or unable to condemn the policy of *apartheid* as resolutely as it might otherwise have done. It was undeniable that such historical links between the Netherlands and South Africa existed. When, however, more than two decades previously, the policy of *apartheid* had become official in South Africa, the Netherlands people had indicated their rejection of racism. When *apartheid* had been placed on the agenda of the General Assembly, the Netherlands had never had the slightest desire to defend the South African system of institutionalized racial segregation. On the contrary, the Netherlands policy had consistently been to reject any form of racial discrimination. At the present session of the General Assembly [1948th plenary meeting] the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, had stated: "we condemn all denials of human rights, including *apartheid*".

47. Her delegation did not consider, however, that *apartheid* should be the sole preoccupation of the United Nations in the field of racial discrimination. Some delegations felt that any reference to unidentified human rights issues would divert attention from the most important problems, such as *apartheid* and other human rights violations of so flagrant a nature that, in their opinion, the principle of the responsibility of Member States for their domestic affairs could no longer be respected. Normally, whenever human rights were violated, there was a general reluctance to identify the situation and mention the responsible country by name. with regard to South Africa, that reluctance had been abandoned long ago. Her delegation recognized the special character of the South African situation, particularly in view of the fact that racial discrimination had become official State policy. That did

not mean, however, that the Netherlands was prepared to accept the inability of the United Nations to deal with other human rights issues on the grounds that national sovereignty must be respected at all costs except in two or three specific countries. While adhering to its total rejection of *apartheid*, her delegation could not agree with the view that only one or two countries were responsible for all the evils of racial discrimination and that all the other countries were blameless. It believed that racial discrimination was a world-wide evil.

48. In observing the International Year, her country had endeavoured to focus attention not only on racial discrimination in other countries but on discrimination against minorities within its own borders. The Netherlands United Nations Association and the Anne Frank Foundation had organized a congress on the theme "Foreigners in our community". The congress had concentrated on problems related to the influx of migrant workers from various countries and had studied also the situation in the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, information about the congress had not become available in time for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General [A/8367].

49. The Netherlands had now completed the necessary legislative formalities and intended to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination before the end of 1971. With regard to the domestic situation, the Government would continue to rely mainly on the work of the many private social organizations; it would take account of the fact that the problem of minorities was, in essence, the responsibility of the majority and that, while immigrants had to adjust to their new country, the established population was also obliged to adjust to the immigrants. With regard to problems of discrimination abroad, her country's position consisted essentially in rejecting extremist policies devised to cope with the problems of heterogeneous societies, i.e., *apartheid* on the one hand and forced assimilation on the other.

50. Mr. BENGTSON (Sweden) observed that one of the purposes of the United Nations was to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. All Member States had pledged themselves to that action under the Charter and such other instruments as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights. By adopting a specific convention on the elimination of racial discrimination, the United Nations had given priority to the necessity of preventing the denial of human rights and fundamental freedoms based on distinction of race, colour or ethnic origin. Indeed, of all the grounds on which a human being could be subjected to discrimination, that of race was perhaps the most debasing to human dignity. It was therefore essential to condemn strongly a political system based on racial discrimination such as the policy of *apartheid* practised by the Government of South Africa.

51. He was pleased to announce that his Government expected to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination before the end of 1971 and that the necessary legislative changes

had been approved by Parliament. His Government furthermore intended to declare that it recognized the right of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to deal with communications from individuals in accordance with article 14, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

52. Nevertheless, attitudes of racial superiority could not be erased from people's minds by legislative acts alone; it was therefore of the utmost importance to educate people, especially the younger generation, to resist the mentality of fear and superiority which was at the root of racial discrimination. It might therefore be useful to consider the possibility of asking the Secretary-General to undertake, as a follow-up to the activities of the International Year, a sustained information programme directed against racial discrimination.

53. Mrs. ESHEL-SHOHAM (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, cited article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as testimony to the relevance of the question of the Jews in the Soviet Union which she had

raised. She also reaffirmed that the fact that the Jews were of Jewish nationality was stated on the identity cards issued by the Soviet Government itself. The Soviet Union had a long tradition of protecting all national minorities except the Jewish minority.

54. It had been implied in the Committee that her delegation was in some way related to certain incidents which she herself deplored as sincerely as everyone else. It was obvious that she could not assume any responsibility for the incidents which had occurred in the city or provide any information about them.

55. Her delegation had never denied the fact that individual Jews had attained elevated positions in the Soviet system. The issue was the discrimination which was practised against Jews as a group and she would very much like to hear from the representative of the Soviet Union that no discrimination was practised against Jews in the Soviet Union, not only individually but also collectively.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.