



Chairman: Miss Maria GROZA (Romania).

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council [chapters VII (sections A, except paragraphs 234 to 239, and B), IX, X (section D), XI (sections A, K and M) and XIII (sections A and B)] (concluded) (A/7929, A/8003 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/8174/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1770, A/C.3/L.1813)

AGENDA ITEM 58

Technical assistance in the field of narcotics: report of the Secretary-General (concluded) (A/8003, chap. XI, sect. A; A/8003/Add.1, A/C.3/L.1813)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS
(concluded)

1. Miss McPHERSON (Australia), speaking in exercise of her right of reply, denied that there had been any physical destruction of the Australian aborigines, as had been asserted by the Soviet representative at the 1818th meeting. The aboriginal population of Australia had more than doubled over the past fifty years, and it was expected that the current figure would triple in the next three decades.

2. Mr. NAYERI (Iran) said that the somewhat discourteous remarks made about Iran at the preceding meeting by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, in response to statements which he himself had made, could be attributed only to ignorance or misinterpretation of those statements. Iran not only advocated respect for human rights but also respected those rights in its territory and supported them wherever necessary, as could be seen from its history. The reason why Iran had not raised its voice in defence of the human rights of the population of Zanzibar under the régime of the Sultans was that it had not been aware of what was happening there and had not maintained close ties with that régime. In contrast, thanks to the very cordial relationship which had been established with the United Republic of Tanzania, the latter country had permitted an Iranian emissary to go to Zanzibar—a gesture for which his Government was profoundly grateful.

3. It was true that, as the Tanzanian delegation had pointed out, Moslems did not contract marriages during Ramadan. He himself had said in his earlier statement, however, that the measures taken against the young girls to which he had referred had been intensified after the end of Ramadan. In reply to the remarks made by the Tanzanian representative concerning freedom of marriage in the

United Republic of Tanzania, he said that a number of girls of Iranian origin who were living with their parents in Zanzibar had been forced to marry against their will, although one of them was only fourteen years old. With due respect for the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania, he conveyed the pathetic appeal of the girls' parents to the Tanzanian delegation and asked that country's authorities, in the interests of Afro-Asian solidarity and fraternity, to consider sympathetically the case of those unfortunate girls.

4. Mr. SALIM (United Republic of Tanzania) said that he regretted the misunderstanding which had arisen between his delegation and that of Iran and cited as proof of the friendship and trust which reigned between the two countries the permission granted by the Tanzanian authorities to the Iranian Ambassador to Ethiopia to travel to the United Republic of Tanzania on a fact-finding mission—which also showed how confident the Government and people of Tanzania felt about what was being done in their country. He therefore asked the delegation of Iran to refrain from making statements which might be interpreted not as an appeal or a request for information but as an indictment of the United Republic of Tanzania, which was proud of its actions in the sphere of human rights and was studying the problem of the marriage of young girls in Zanzibar in an effort to safeguard the rights of all concerned.

5. Mrs. DINÇMEN (Turkey) stated that her delegation's vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1841, by which it had supported the establishment of a United Nations fund for drug abuse control, did not commit her Government to make any financial contribution to the fund—a matter on which no decision had yet been taken.

AGENDA ITEM 52

Question of the elderly and the aged (A/7939 and Corr.1)

6. Mr. PARDO (Malta) recalled that the question had been on the agenda of the preceding session of the General Assembly but that there had not been time to consider it on that occasion.¹ The same situation had arisen at the current session, since it was no longer feasible to go into the substance of the question. That being so, he merely wished to propose that the item should be deferred until the twenty-sixth session and that it should be given priority and adequate consideration. Expressing gratitude to the Secretary-General for his report (A/7939 and Corr.1), he suggested that further activities on the question should be undertaken during the coming year and that the item

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 100, document A/7911.

should be included in the five-year work programme of the Commission for Social Development.

7. Mr. JANSSON (Director, Social Development Division) stressed that the question of the elderly and the aged was already a serious problem in some countries and would become still more acute in the coming years. In view of the importance of the item, the Secretariat had decided to produce a report on the subject (A/7939 and Corr.1), even though no documentation had been requested from it. The Secretariat would, of course, not wait until the next session to undertake new work on the item. Moreover, the draft work programme to be submitted to the Commission for Social Development at its twenty-second session in March 1971 included a proposal that country studies should be made on the policies followed by Governments in dealing with the problems confronting the elderly in changing societies. He hoped to be able to give the Third Committee further information at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Lastly, he regretted that it had not been possible to consider the item in detail at the current session and shared the Maltese delegation's hope that there would be sufficient time in 1971 to decide how the question should be dealt with.

8. Mr. SATHE (India), Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syria) and Mr. HJELDE (Norway), stressing their interest in the important question of the elderly and the aged, said that they regretted that there had been no opportunity to consider it during the current session and hoped that it would be given the attention it deserved in 1971.

9. Mr. GANDA (Sierra Leone), supported by Mr. MOUS-SA (United Arab Republic), said that while he shared the interest of the previous speakers in the question of the elderly and the aged, he thought it inadvisable to impose commitments on the next session of the General Assembly by recommending that high priority should be assigned to a large number of items. In his view, it would be wiser to suggest that sufficient time should be reserved next year for the consideration of items which it had not been possible to consider in 1970.

10. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, she would take it that the Committee adopted the Maltese proposal that the question of the elderly and the aged should be deferred until the twenty-sixth session and should be given priority and adequate consideration at that time.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 48

Housing, building and planning: report of the Secretary-General (A/8003, chap. VII, sect. B; A/8037, A/C.3/L.1836/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1848)

11. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said he thought it unfortunate that the Committee had not had time to consider the item on housing, building and planning as a matter of high priority, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2598 (XXIV), particularly since the Secretary-General had submitted a valuable report on the subject (A/8037) and

the report of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning on its sixth session² had been considered in the Commission for Social Development and in the Economic and Social Council. As the Second United Nations Development Decade got under way, it was essential to clarify thinking on the problems of housing, whose importance in the development process was recognized in paragraph 71 of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (see General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV)), which also laid down certain policy measures in that connexion.

12. In addition, the Interregional Seminar on Improvement of Slums and Uncontrolled Settlements, held from 15 February to 1 March 1970 at Medellín, Colombia, had identified the problem of human settlements as urgent and had stressed the need to find rapid solutions at the national and international level. The report of the Secretary-General (A/8037) reflected the magnitude of the problem; it pointed out that the proliferation of slums could lead to a considerable retardation in the development of a country. Unfortunately, many countries, especially the developing countries, had not attached sufficient importance to the planning of housing. Most countries had not achieved the target of ten housing units per 1,000 inhabitants proposed during the First Development Decade; the present proportion was only two units per 1,000. The report stressed that present problems would become much greater and more complicated unless the countries concerned and the international community were prepared to face the challenge. During the coming decade, the urbanized areas would double and their rate of growth would be twice that of the population.

13. The causes of the failure in the field of housing during the First Decade, particularly in the developing countries, were to be found in the paucity of resources available to those countries and in the lack of an integrated approach to the planning of housing and building. Paragraphs 173-175 of the Secretary-General's report (A/8037) made some suggestions in that connexion.

14. He then introduced draft resolution A/C.3/L.1836/Rev.1 and announced that the delegations of Costa Rica, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Gabon, Mali and Niger had joined the sponsors. He drew attention to operative paragraph 4, which invited the Economic and Social Council and the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning to consider additional innovative approaches for the improvement of housing and human settlements. With regard to operative paragraph 7, which stated that the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning should play a major role in the formulation and co-ordination of United Nations programmes and projects relating to the problems of housing and human settlements, he observed that that was not a radical idea, since the Centre was already playing an important role in that field, and it was in any case merely a suggestion. He hoped that the draft resolution would receive the unanimous support of the Committee.

15. Mr. NAYERI (Iran) said that the problem of housing existed in both the developing and the developed countries

² Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2.

but had different characteristics in each case. The developed countries faced a crisis in housing as well as air pollution, noise, waste disposal and other problems of that nature which were the result of technological advances. On the other hand, the developing countries had to deal with basic problems in the field of housing which involved important health factors. It was essential for governmental and non-governmental organizations, together with the specialized agencies of the United Nations, to embark on a campaign aimed at solving those problems. It was to be hoped that the problem of human settlements would be stressed at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment to be held in Stockholm in 1972. He also hoped that a United Nations international institute for documentation on housing, building and planning would be established. In that connexion, he endorsed the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in his report, which emphasized the urgent nature of the problems confronting many developing countries. For those reasons, he would wholeheartedly support any move aimed at devising a coherent system of long-term planning in the field of housing.

16. Mr. SATHE (India) said that the right to housing was a fundamental human right. In a recent article, Mr. Coan of the United States Senate Housing Sub-Committee had emphasized the need for a revolution in housing and urban development along the lines of the "green revolution" and the health revolution achieved by FAO and WHO. The ever-growing problems of urbanization were a product of the population explosion and of lack of employment opportunities, which together led to large-scale migration from rural to urban areas and to the impoverishment of the former. Unless collective measures were taken to supply a new economic basis for rural and small-town people, the benefits of the food and health revolution would be lost in overcrowded cities and slums.

17. India attached great importance to housing, building and planning, which were essential for raising the standard of living of a nation of 550 million people. He had read with interest the report of the Secretary-General (A/8037) and endorsed the proposals it made for national and international action. In that connexion, he noted that paragraph 71 of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade attached particular importance to housing and related community services in urban and rural areas, especially for low-income groups.

18. According to the 1961 census, there were 66 million rural houses and 14 million urban houses in India with an average of 2.58 persons per room in the former and 2.61 in the latter. Most of the rural houses were mud huts, and a large proportion of urban workers lived in extremely poor conditions. The housing shortage at the beginning of the fourth five-year plan (1969-1974) had been estimated at 83 million units, 12 million in urban areas and 71 million in rural areas, and was increasing by 2 million units annually. A department for housing had been created in 1952 with a view to organizing governmental efforts and providing financial assistance in housing construction to co-operatives, local bodies, workers, etc. Most of the funds for those projects were provided by the Union Government and by the Life Insurance Corporation of India. One of the aims of the fourth five-year plan was to provide cheaper houses by

organizing the supply of materials and undertaking research on practical schemes for reducing the cost of building.

19. As indicated in the section on housing in the *World Economic Survey, 1969*, two of the important parameters of the housing situation were unit cost and the rate of urban growth. The core of the problem therefore lay in "low-income" housing. A target of \$500 per unit, plus a similar sum for auxiliary services, had been suggested. India had begun to take an active interest in the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning in 1964 when the Committee had taken up the proposal to set up at New Delhi an international institute for documentation on housing, building and planning, which was intended to serve both the developed and the developing countries without duplicating the work done by other international agencies. His delegation had no objection to the industrialized countries setting up regional centres in accordance with the initiative taken by France but was surprised that those countries, which had expressed interest in regional centres, had not yet offered financial assistance for the proposed International Institute. He therefore asked Member States to make every effort to support it. His Government felt that preparatory work should begin at New Delhi and not in Geneva and had offered a contribution of \$52,500 over a three-year period to defray the costs of the work.

20. The Secretary-General had submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its forty-eighth session a report containing the work programme for 1971 in the economic, social and human rights fields.³ The Secretary-General had planned only one additional professional post for the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning for 1971.⁴ In view of the Secretary-General's statement at the 1357th meeting of the Fifth Committee, on 5 October 1970, his delegation would like to know whether it was still intended to give the Centre the new post.

21. Mr. HALL (United Kingdom) introduced the amendments in document A/C.3/L.1848 to draft resolution A/C.3/L.1836/Rev.1. In the opinion of the sponsors of the amendments, the United Nations should not examine the question of housing in isolation but should bear in mind the importance of over-all economic development, which would provide the people of the countries concerned with sufficient resources to secure for themselves reasonable housing conditions. The housing problem of developing countries could be solved only as a result of their own increasing wealth, which would be achieved by developing industry and agriculture as well as the services contributing to economic expansion.

22. The United Kingdom, in addition to being prepared to consider requests for bilateral technical assistance, also offered aid through the Overseas Division of its Building-Research Station and the Road Research Laboratory, organizations which provided expert advice on building science and physical planning, especially with regard to the problems of tropical and sub-tropical areas. The projects which received aid included educational establishments, hospitals and clinics, administrative buildings and housing for government staff. Further assistance to foreign Governments was provided by making available training facilities in

³ See document E/4793, chap. IV.

⁴ *Ibid.*, table 3.

the United Kingdom for staff concerned with building and by recruitment of architects, engineers and other professional officers to fill public service posts in developing countries. The Commonwealth Development Corporation had been active in stimulating finance for housing in a number of developing countries. As at 31 December 1969, £30 million had been committed to housing projects in developing countries and £22 million had actually been invested.

23. The policy pursued by the United Kingdom with regard to aid was to leave it to the Governments of the developing countries to decide their own priorities. His delegation did not believe, therefore, that the United Nations should attempt to impose housing on developing countries as a higher priority by encouraging the diversion of aid to housing purposes. For that reason, his delegation had submitted an amendment to operative paragraph 3. In the sponsors' opinion, that paragraph was so formulated as to suggest the imposition on developing countries of such a priority and they felt that the words "appropriate assistance" would be more in accordance with the principle of consumer choice.

24. With regard to the amendment submitted to operative paragraph 2, the words "where appropriate" did not require clarification. That paragraph made recommendations to all Member States, yet some of the recommendations were manifestly not appropriate to developed countries, in particular subparagraph (d). Furthermore, the paragraph suggested to the United Nations organizations certain actions which would have serious implications for the allocation of their regular budgets. Those recommendations should not be made without more detailed study. They should therefore be confined to Member States, with the assistance, upon request, of the specialized agencies of the United Nations.

25. Operative paragraph 7 was not realistic, given the present financial difficulties of the Organization. At the present time, it was necessary to leave it to the Secretary-General to allocate his staff as he thought best, and the sponsors of the amendments therefore proposed the deletion of the final part of the paragraph.

26. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan), referring to the amendments which the United Kingdom representative had just submitted (A/C.3/L.1848), said that the first part of the first amendment was not acceptable, since the sponsors did not wish the recommendation to be confined to Member States but felt that it should include the international organizations concerned. Nor did the second part of the amendment, proposing the insertion of the words "where appropriate", seem warranted; in his opinion it was unnecessary, since the Member States and the United Nations organizations concerned would not adopt the measures mentioned in the paragraph unless they considered them appropriate. With regard to the replacement in operative paragraph 3 of the expression "increased assistance" by "appropriate assistance", he preferred to retain the former. As to the proposed amendment to operative paragraph 7, he said that he was not in a position at that time to give a final reply.

27. Mr. AL-BABTIN (Kuwait), supported by Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco), moved the closure of the debate.

28. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, she would take it that the Committee decided to close the debate on item 48.

It was so decided.

29. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on draft resolution A/C.3/L.1836/Rev.1 and on the amendments in document A/C.3/L.1848.

The first part of the amendment to operative paragraph 2 was rejected by 56 votes to 21, with 4 abstentions.

The second part of the amendment to operative paragraph 2 was rejected by 60 votes to 11, with 13 abstentions.

The amendment to operative paragraph 3 was rejected by 58 votes to 8 with 14 abstentions.

The amendment to operative paragraph 7 was rejected by 60 votes to 21, with 2 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.3/L.1836/Rev.1 was adopted by 79 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

30. Mr. STILLMAN (United States of America), speaking in explanation of his vote, said that his delegation could not agree with the formulation of operative paragraphs 3 and 7 of resolution A/C.3/1836/Rev.1, and regretted that the amendments in document A/C.3/1848 had not been adopted. Although it agreed with the sponsors of the draft resolution that adequate housing was a fundamental human requirement, it felt that they should bear in mind the interrelationship between needs and resources and the necessity of establishing an order of priorities in national development. Such priorities would be determined in the course of applying the International Development Strategy for the Second Development Decade, and it could happen that housing would not be given high priority in the development process.

31. Accordingly, his delegation did not think that increased assistance necessarily had to be given to the housing sector, as provided in operative paragraph 3. In its view, the expression "appropriate assistance" more adequately reflected the nature of the assistance required by the developing countries.

32. With regard to operative paragraph 7, although his delegation had high regard for the work of the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning it doubted whether the time was appropriate to allocate more resources to that body. He urged the Committee not to make recommendations on the allocation of the limited resources available to the Secretariat until it had seen the results of the study being carried out on that subject by the Secretary-General.

33. Mr. REBAGLIATI (Argentina) said he had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1836/Rev.1 because he felt that it was of unquestionable value, and because many of the measures and suggestions in question had already been adopted by Argentina through its General Planning System. However, he had certain reservations with respect to operative paragraph 1 (f), which referred to a review, if

necessary, of the legislative framework governing land tenure and the transfer of land and buildings in urban and rural areas, and with respect to the last part of operative paragraph 2 (a), it being his understanding that the questions mentioned in that passage fell within the domestic jurisdiction of States. Therefore, although he respected the position of countries which felt that the matter could be examined in the Committee, he wished to make the express reservation that, so far as Argentina was concerned, the matter fell within its domestic jurisdiction.

34. Mr. FOMICHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in explanation of his vote, said that his delegation had abstained because it did not feel that increasing the personnel and resources allocated to the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning would enable the Centre to fulfil its key role. He recalled that the Secretary-General had requested United Nations bodies not to increase their budgets but to maintain them at the 1970 level.⁵ The best way of increasing the effectiveness of the Centre was not to increase its personnel but to improve its quality.

AGENDA ITEM 51

Freedom of information (A/8036, A/C.3/L.1839/Rev.1):

- (a) **Draft Declaration on Freedom of Information;**
- (b) **Draft Convention on Freedom of Information**

35. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) introduced revised draft resolution A/C.3/L.1839/Rev.1 in which the General Assembly expressed regret that it had not been possible to consider the question of freedom of information, or the draft resolution on that subject, at the current session, and in which it decided to give priority to the consideration of that item at its twenty-sixth session.

36. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote draft resolution A/C.3/L.1839/Rev.1.

The revised draft resolution was adopted by 67 votes to none, with 15 abstentions.

37. Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco) said that her delegation had been absent during the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/L.1839/Rev.1 and would have voted in favour of it had it been present.

AGENDA ITEM 54

Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance (A/7930):

- (a) **Draft Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance;**
- (b) **Draft International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief**

38. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no draft resolution had been submitted on the item, suggested that, if there were no objections, the Committee should recommend to the

General Assembly that the item should be deferred to the twenty-sixth session.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 56

Human rights and scientific and technological developments: report of the Secretary-General (A/8003, chap. IX, sect. L; A/8055 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.1845, E/CN.4/1028 and Add.1 and 2, Add.3 and Corr.1, Add.4 and 5)

39. Mrs. OGATA (Japan) said that her delegation had looked forward with interest to consideration of the item at the current session. It was therefore somewhat disappointed at having to introduce, on its own behalf and on that of the delegations of Finland, France, Iran, the Philippines and Sweden, the procedural draft resolution in document A/C.3/L.1845, by which the General Assembly would decide to give the question the attention it deserved at the following session. While it could not be denied that the international community must take action to prevent the flagrant violations of human rights which were committed for racial, religious or political reasons, there had recently been a growing awareness of the need to study the impact of scientific and technological developments on the social and humanitarian aspects of life, in particular on the right to health, work, education, social security and participation in the cultural life of the community. In view of the large number of private organizations and governmental and intergovernmental authorities which had expressed concern about the infringement of privacy by electronic equipment, perhaps the time had come to formulate standards which would ensure that the use of the new technical devices did not involve any such abuse. Similarly, in the areas of biology, medicine and biochemistry there was an urgent need for standards to protect human rights in transplant operations, medical experiments and the use of drugs. At the same time problems were arising which had deep social implications, such as the need to safeguard the rights of workers in relation to automation, the misuse of electronic communications media for propaganda and advertising purposes, and the use of computers for decision-making, with the consequences which such a practice might have for democratic processes.

40. As indicated by the Secretary-General in his exhaustive report (E/CN.4/1028 and Add.1 and 2, Add.3 and Corr.1 and Add.4 and 5) the area of study of the effects of scientific and technological developments on human rights should include the question of the deterioration of the human environment, in particular air and water pollution, noise, traffic congestion and other problems which encroached on two aspects of human rights: the right to life and the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of the individual and his family. In Japan the threat to human rights arising from the deterioration of the environment had aroused deep concern on the part of the public, which had enthusiastically espoused the new cause of the right to a decent environment. The Japanese Government regarded that problem as the most important issue in the coming decade and was planning long-term policies to combat acts of abuse and to minimize the

⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 73, document A/C.5/1309.

deterioration of the human environment. At the same time, it looked to the United Nations to take the initiative in conducting studies on the question and in formulating the necessary standards.

41. The problem of human rights and scientific and technological developments did not affect the industrially developed countries alone. In the developing countries, which as a result of the rapid rate of progress were achieving in ten or twenty years what older countries had achieved only after several centuries, there was a very serious danger that human rights and happiness would be sacrificed to scientific progress.

42. She wished to revise draft resolution A/C.3/L.1845 by inserting the following paragraph after the fourth preambular paragraph:

“Noting also the preliminary memorandum of the World Health Organization (A/8055/Add.1)”.

43. Mr. GANDA (Sierra Leone) suggested that the word “high” should be deleted from operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1845.

44. Mrs. OGATA (Japan) said that her delegation would have no difficulty in accepting the suggestion made by the Sierra Leone delegation, on the understanding that the item would be given detailed consideration at the following session.

45. Dr. COIGNEY (World Health Organization) requested that a reference to the preliminary memorandum of WHO (see A/8055/Add.1) should also be made in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Japan.

46. Mrs. OGATA (Japan) said that her delegation would be pleased to comply with the request of the WHO representative.

47. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on draft resolution A/C.3/L.1845, as orally revised.

Draft resolution A/C.3/L.1845, as orally revised, was adopted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 59

Status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: report of the Secretary-General (A/8071 and Corr.1)

48. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, if there was no objection, the Committee should recommend the General Assembly to take note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/8071 and Corr.1) and request him to submit at the twenty-sixth session another report, which would be considered as a separate agenda item.

It was so decided.

Conclusion of the Committee's work

After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairman declared the Committee's work concluded.

The meeting rose on Saturday, 12 December, at 12.25 a.m.