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Chairman: Mrs. Mara RADIĆ (Yugoslavia).

AGENDA ITEM 58

International Year for Human Rights (continued):

- (a) Programme of Measures and Activities to be undertaken in connexion with the International Year for Human Rights: report of the Secretary-General (continued) (A/6687, A/6866 and Add.1);
- (b) Report of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Human Rights (continued) (A/6354, A/6670 and Corr.1)

1. Mr. RIOS (Panama), exercising his right of reply, said that the Cuban representative had violently attacked the OAS at the 1536th meeting. He wished to point out that the OAS had absolutely nothing to do with the disturbances which had broken out in Panama in January 1964 or with the course of relations between Panama and the United States. Several years earlier, under the pretext of defending Panama, Che Guevara, then head of the Cuban delegation, had launched violent diatribes against that country; Panama was a sovereign State which had no need for outside help in conducting its foreign policy, and its dispute with the United States had been settled through negotiations, on an equal footing with the United States Government.

2. The arguments which the Cuban representative had advanced to slander the OAS were hardly convincing: Panama had not been responsible for the convening of the Ministerial Conference on Cuba to which the Cuban delegation had referred; Panama had attended only as a member of the OAS. In 1959, eighty-two Cubans armed by the new régime had landed on Panama's shores with the intention of invading that country. They had been captured, but the OAS had intervened to protect them. Thanks to the diligence of that organization, which the Cuban delegation had so vehemently condemned, they had been able to return safely to Cuba and Panama had

decided not to prosecute them as it had had every right to do.

3. Miss HART (New Zealand) said that preparations in New Zealand were well under way for the programme it was to undertake in 1968 in observance of the International Year for Human Rights and that her Government's information on the subject appeared in the Secretary-General's report (A/6866).

4. Her delegation hoped that the International Conference on Human Rights to be held at Teheran would give positive direction to United Nations efforts to ensure recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms. To accomplish that, past efforts must be analysed in relation to what should be done in the future. The Conference should not be an occasion for speeches of self-congratulation or unproductive polemics, but should provide imaginative planning for the future.

5. In its broad outlines, the provisional agenda prepared by the Preparatory Committee offered a logical working basis. It provided for a review of the progress made and an identification of the major obstacles encountered since 1948; the efforts of the United Nations in the past twenty years had been mainly devoted to the formulation of universal standards and while significant progress had been accomplished, much remained to be done. The failure of the Third Committee to take a decision at the current session on the draft convention on religious intolerance showed that there were aspects of discrimination still to be examined. The agenda also envisaged an evaluation of the methods and techniques that had been employed. A careful and critical analysis of those two agenda items was required so that the Conference could draw up a programme for the future.

6. The Conference should also consider how to implement the standards established by the Organization, by studying the suggestions put forward over the past few years, such as the establishment of an Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and of national commissions and regional arrangements where they did not already exist, or the possibility of strengthening the structures within the Secretariat. The heart of the matter was to determine what the standards of the Universal Declaration meant in practice, how countries were prepared to implement them and how the international community could best assist them.

7. Although sub-item c to some extent duplicated sub-items a and b, agenda item 11 should permit a full discussion of the whole range of human rights and of the techniques for their advancement. The annotated agenda to be prepared by the Secretariat

should direct attention to suggestions made under the various headings but not specifically included; under item 11 e, mention should be made, for example, of freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.

8. The provisional rules of procedure proposed by the Preparatory Committee (A/6670 and Corr.1, annex I) were by and large acceptable to her delegation. However, the Conference should follow standard procedure and use three working languages, for it seemed inequitable and might set a costly precedent to use four languages. It was, of course, necessary to add a provision about the rights of non-governmental organizations authorized to send observers to the Conference, for such organizations made a very significant contribution to human rights. New Zealand, for its part, would have wished that full rights be granted to non-governmental organizations, but it also wished to consider the views of other delegations. It had been suggested that there should be a restriction on the number of non-governmental organizations to be invited; however, experience suggested the likelihood that only a small number of them would be able to send observers. She hoped that the Committee would find a formula acceptable to the majority.

9. Mrs. OULD DADDAH (Mauritania) hoped that the International Conference on Human Rights would make it possible to review past successes and failures and to establish guidelines for future action. While considerable progress had been accomplished—for which the Organization and the Secretary-General deserved thanks and which included the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women—it was necessary to keep things in perspective and remember that the major task facing many countries was to overcome ignorance and under-development. Asia was ravaged by war, the Middle East situation remained unstable and Africa was plagued by apartheid and mercenaries' activities; two-thirds of mankind suffered from hunger, ignorance and disease and did not have the detachment required for theoretical discussions on the concepts of human rights.

10. Her delegation found the provisional agenda (A/6670 and Corr.1, annex II) satisfactory and was particularly pleased that item 11 d was devoted to women's rights. It hoped that the long-term programme that was envisaged would take into account problems peculiar to the developing countries.

11. Some of the non-governmental organizations truly served the cause of human rights by the influence they exerted on public authorities and by their efforts to educate and inform the public; it would be unfortunate and unfair not to invite them. On the other hand, organizations which were merely propaganda organs in the pay of certain Governments should be excluded. The Preparatory Committee should make the final decision as to the number of non-governmental organizations to be invited, bearing in mind the guidelines and criteria laid down by the Third Committee. She hoped that an invitation would be extended to those non-governmental organizations whose principles, purposes and activities were in true harmony with human rights and those with a direct interest

in the Conference's agenda, such as various organizations combating apartheid, even if they did not enjoy consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; equitable geographical distribution should also be sought and, as most of the organizations were international or world-wide, they should be invited on the basis of the location of their headquarters and the nationality of most of their members; the Preparatory Committee would no doubt be able to carry out that difficult task.

12. All nations should take part in the Conference, for otherwise it would meet with only partial success.

13. In observance of the International Year for Human Rights, Mauritania was planning radio broadcasts, stamp issues and discussions in schools and youth clubs.

14. Mrs. UMA PANDEY (Nepal) said that Nepal attached great importance to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and believed that the International Year for Human Rights should be a milestone in the history of the United Nations. Every year Nepal observed a human rights day, on which the King addressed the country and educational institutions and the United Nations Association arranged talks on human rights.

15. The Nepalese Constitution established fundamental rights such as equality before the law. The social principles in the Constitution aimed at ensuring the welfare of the people and social justice.

16. Her delegation believed that the International Conference on Human Rights should stimulate further efforts to achieve justice, freedom and dignity of the human person. As the Preparatory Committee had suggested, it should consider the effectiveness of United Nations activities and condemn such phenomena as slavery and similar practices. World public opinion should condemn South Africa's policy of apartheid and Portuguese domination in Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea. Those violations of human rights made effective international measures essential.

17. In order to give more meaning to economic and cultural rights, the Conference should deal in particular with the problems of developing countries. Attention should also be given to the rights of women—particularly the right to education and work—and the advancement of women in general. It might be useful to consider an integrated long-term programme for the advancement of women.

18. The various instruments adopted by the General Assembly in the past fifteen years were evidence of the progress made in the promotion of human rights.

19. Regional inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations should be invited to participate in the Conference.

20. The Western Powers should agree to condemn apartheid, which was a crime against humanity. At the same time it should be recognized that non-governmental organizations in Western countries had often induced their Governments to abandon anachronistic policies and had done some useful pioneering work. She hoped that the International Year

for Human Rights would help to promote a better understanding between peoples.

21. Mrs. HARMAN (Israel) hoped that the Teheran Conference would be a milestone in the history of human rights. To ensure that it was, special efforts should be made to tackle the root causes of the evils which were responsible for so much humiliation and suffering. Everyone should rise above his own pre-occupations or political passions. The success of the Conference would depend ultimately on its significance for individuals everywhere and on the extent to which it reached out to the minds of people.

22. As regards the programme of work, her delegation attached great importance to educational measures of all kinds, from the fight against illiteracy to high-level seminars; but it also wished to stress the central role played by the home and family in the formative years of a child's life. High priority should therefore be given to measures for the advancement of women.

23. More emphasis should also be placed on programmes for youth, exchange visits between countries, and opportunities for young people to live and work together in different conditions and environments, so that, by personal observation and participation, they could obtain a better understanding of human problems.

24. All shades of opinion and all political beliefs should be represented at the Conference; and, for that reason, her delegation favoured the participation of non-governmental organizations—particularly those in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council—which had demonstrated their interest in human rights issues and showed that they could make a useful contribution.

25. Precisely because of their diversity, non-governmental organizations represented the major trends of world opinion. It was true that many of them had their headquarters in the West; but that was only to be expected, since the organizations themselves were the natural expression of interest and conviction in democracies. However, many of them were now trying to broaden their membership in the developing world and to establish regional offices.

26. She hoped that the Conference would encourage more voluntary initiatives for the promotion of human rights in every country and area of the world. The peoples of the world should act together in defence of human dignity, transcending national boundaries and political divisions.

27. Mr. BASHIER (Sudan) thanked the Iranian Government for inviting the International Conference on Human Rights to meet at Teheran. His own Government was at present making arrangements for celebrating the International Year and would publish a statement on its programme of activities as soon as it had been established.

28. His delegation noted with satisfaction the arrangements contemplated by regional inter-governmental organizations such as the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States and the League of Arab States. The last-named organization was to organize, with the assistance of the United Nations, two international conferences on human rights, one

at Jerusalem and the other at Gaza, towns in which the Israelis were now committing many violations of human rights.

29. On the question of participation by non-governmental organizations, he said that those organizations represented one region of the world and one particular social and political system. The Western delegations which had advocated the participation of non-governmental organizations in the Conference were, in fact, the same delegations which had opposed the participation of certain States such as the People's Republic of China. Some non-governmental organizations might indeed be engaged in activities relating to human rights; but others were involved in reprehensible political activities which had nothing to do with the protection of human rights. In principle, therefore, his delegation was opposed to their participation in the Conference. On the other hand, as the Committee was now trying to work out a formula acceptable to the majority of delegations, he himself would be prepared to agree, as a reasonable solution, that a very restricted number of non-governmental organizations should be allowed to participate. Those invited should include organizations dealing with the elimination of apartheid and colonialism, and the selection should be based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

30. In conclusion, he hoped that the International Conference on Human Rights would be an effective starting point for the elimination of the policies of racial discrimination practised by South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Portugal.

31. Mrs. DE BARRIOS (Dominican Republic), speaking in exercise of her right of reply, deplored the accusations made at the previous meeting against the Organization of American States and regretted that efforts were being made to divert the Committee's attention from its work by political manoeuvres. However, she would refrain from replying to the substance of the Cuban representative's statements, partly because they were off the subject and partly because she herself had not been in the service of the Dominican Government which had been in power at the time when the events mentioned had occurred. Her delegation believed that regional organizations, and particularly the Organization of American States, should be invited to participate in the Teheran Conference, as they could make a valuable contribution to its work.

32. Mrs. JIMENEZ MARTINEZ (Cuba), replying to delegations which had defended the Organization of American States, said that its history was one long series of interventions by North American imperialism in the affairs of Latin American countries. On the other hand, no Government had fought for the right of peoples to self-determination or had upheld the sovereign rights of States more consistently than the Cuban Government. The Organization of American States was a tool in the hands of United States imperialism, enabling it to give an appearance of legality to its aggression and police operations. The Organization of American States could not be regarded as a regional organization of the United Nations, since one State Member of the United Nations, Cuba, which was obviously part of the Latin-American region was

excluded from it. Accordingly, the United Nations would be repudiating its own principles if it were to sanction the discriminatory policy practised by the OAS against one of its member States. That discrimination was based solely on the fact that Cuba had chosen the path of genuine independence and had thrown off the imperialist yoke.

33. The Cuban Government had been accused of subversive activities, merely because, it had repeatedly asserted the historical necessity that the peoples should put an end by force to the imperialist system and its rapaciousness. But the Cuban people sympathized with all peoples fighting for their freedom, particularly the peoples of Latin America which were following in the tradition of the heroes who had brought political independence to the continent. The peoples of Latin America were taking the path of revolution because of the conditions of hunger, poverty, terror, unemployment, illiteracy, and exploitation by North American monopolies. But a large section of the human race had now come to adopt the much-abused system of communism as its ideal. In that connexion, she wished to make it clear that, in denouncing the aggression committed against the people of Panama, she had been doing her duty as a comrade on behalf of a fraternal people. She had not had the least intention of defending the Government or delegation of Panama, which had not defended its people when they had been massacred by United States Marines. As Major Guevara had said, such policies might be called tactics in diplomatic language but, in revolutionary language, they could only be called servility.

34. She paid a tribute to the memory of Che Guevara, an outstanding personality who had combined the talents of a man of action with those of a thinker or even a visionary.

35. Mrs. BARISH (Costa Rica), speaking in exercise of her right of reply, regretted that, instead of addressing itself to the item under consideration, the Cuban delegation had indulged in invective against the OAS. At the previous meeting her delegation had been intending to speak at greater length on the International Year, but the statements by the Cuban delegation had prevented it from doing so.

36. In support of the remarks she had made on the previous day, she referred to the 20 October 1967 issue of the Cuban periodical *Bohemia*, which was devoted entirely to Che Guevara and paid a tribute to the sincerity of his Marxist-Leninist beliefs. Che Guevara had himself died a victim of Cuba's interventionist policy, from which the OAS was trying to protect Latin American countries.

37. Mr. SCHREIBER (Secretariat), replying to the Ukrainian representative (1536th meeting), who had asked the Secretariat to prepare a brief document indicating the number of non-governmental organizations active in different parts of the world, especially in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe, said that the consultative status of non-governmental organizations, and their relations, under the Charter, with the Economic and Social Council, had been defined in Council resolution 288 (X). The criteria established in that resolution had been applied up to the present, but the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution

1225 (XLII), had decided to review the position of organizations in consultative status.

38. Resolution 288 (X) recognized the contribution which the non-governmental organizations could make to the work of the United Nations, and stated in particular "that consultations between the Council and its subsidiary organs and the non-governmental organizations should be developed to the fullest practicable extent". The organizations should be concerned "with matters falling within the competence of the Economic and Social Council with respect to international, economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters and to questions of human rights". The organizations should "undertake to support the work of the United Nations and to promote knowledge of its principles and activities", and they should be international in their structure. The resolution stated further that, in accordance with the distinction made in the Charter, non-governmental organizations should not have the same rights of participation in the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council as were accorded to States not members of the Council and to the specialized agencies. Lastly, the purpose of the consultative status of the non-governmental organizations was, on the one hand, to enable "the Council or one of its bodies to secure expert information or advice from organizations having special competence in the subjects for which consultative arrangements are made, and, on the other hand, to enable organizations which represent important elements of public opinion to express their views". There were three categories of non-governmental organizations: the organizations in category A were "organizations which have a basic interest in most of the activities of the Council and are closely linked with the economic or social life of the areas which they represent"; the organizations in category B were "organizations which have a special competence in, and are concerned specifically with, only a few of the fields of activity covered by the Council"; and lastly, the organizations entered in the register were "organizations recommended for inclusion by the Council or its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations; . . . international organizations in consultative status or similar relationship with a specialized agency", and the other international organizations designated by the Secretary-General as having "a significant contribution to make to the work of the Council or its subsidiary bodies". Under the terms of resolution 288 (X), the Economic and Social Council might invite non-governmental organizations "to take part in conferences called by the Council" with "the same rights . . . as at sessions of the Council itself". It should be mentioned, however, that the Teheran Conference was not a conference of the Economic and Social Council, but a conference of the General Assembly.

39. There were, in all, 378 non-governmental organizations having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council: twelve in category A, 143 in category B and 223 entered in the register. It was not easy to specify in which areas the non-governmental organizations were active, for many of them were defined as world or international organizations and had objectives which were not confined to a single region. That was true of most of the organizations in

category A. In category B, on the other hand, there were several non-governmental organizations of a regional type, such as the Afro-Asian Organization for Economic Co-operation and the All African Women's Conference, or of the national type, such as the All India Women's Conference and the All Pakistan Women's Association. The non-governmental organizations were active in widely differing fields: some were concerned with human rights, others not. To prepare a document indicating in which regions those organizations were active would be a long and difficult task. The Non-Governmental Organization Section was proposing to gather information on that subject for the use of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. In order to define the field of activities of the non-governmental organizations, it was first of all necessary to know in which countries they had affiliated associations. He quoted a few statistics by way of example: among the non-governmental organizations in category A, the World Federation of United Nations Associations had 59 national associations spread over 17 countries, 9 of the national associations being in Africa, 10 in the Americas, 14 in Asia and 26 in Europe, including 5 in Eastern Europe. The World Veterans Federation had 15 national associations in Africa, 5 in America, 14 in Asia and 14 in Europe. The International Co-operative Alliance had 200 million members in 55 countries and had 9 branches in Africa, 13 in Asia, 10 in America and 23 in Europe, including 6 in Eastern Europe. The World Federation of Trade Unions had 12 associations in Africa, 12 in Asia, 18 in America and 12 in Europe. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions had 17 national affiliated associations in Africa, 36 in America, 18 in Asia and 21 in Europe. Among the non-governmental organizations

in category B, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs had 5 national commissions in Africa, 5 in America, 10 in Asia and 14 in Europe, including 4 in Eastern Europe. The Associated Country Women of the World had 11 affiliated associations in Africa, 11 in America, 15 in Asia and 12 in Europe. The International Council of Women had 13 national associations in Africa, 17 in America, 14 in Asia and 16 in Europe. It could be seen from those examples that the non-governmental organizations included not only a large number of international and world organizations, but also regional and national organizations, and that in many cases they were active on an interregional scale.

40. Mr. VERENIKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), exercising his right of reply, said that, quite recently, when the Soviet Union was celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the October revolution, the majority of delegations present at the plenary meeting of the General Assembly had paid a tribute to the Soviet State, not only for the results it had achieved in the technical, economic and social fields, but also for achievements of socialist democracy which ensured respect for human rights and defended oppressed peoples. Hence the allegations made by the Israel representative at a preceding meeting, that certain Soviet citizens had been deprived of their rights, were nothing but an attempt to blacken the image of the Soviet Union and to exonerate Israel, which was violating the rights of the Arab population in territories it had usurped.

41. The CHAIRMAN declared the list of speakers wishing to take part in the general debate closed.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.