

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly

FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
11th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 10 October 1989
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GHEZAL (Tunisia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 82: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

(c) CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES (continued)

(d) EFFECTIVE MOBILIZATION AND INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(h) HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2/580, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

**Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/44/SR.11
16 October 1989**

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 82: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)
(A/44/3; A/44/84; A/44/139; A/44/187; A/44/188; A/44/235; A/44/254; A/44/260;
A/44/409 and Corr.1; A/44/499)

(c) CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES (continued) (A/44/266 and
Add.1 and Add.2; A/44/379)

(d) EFFECTIVE MOBILIZATION AND INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (continued)
(A/44/290; ST/CSDHA/6)

(h) HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (continued) (A/44/8 and Add.1; A/44/534)

1. Mr. AHMED (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs) drew attention to the fact that women's child-bearing and child-rearing roles defined the conditions of their participation in economic life. For example, in developing countries, women were married young and had their first child at age 19 or 20. Moreover, as a result of rapid socio-economic change, 35 per cent of households were headed by women. In certain areas of sub-Saharan Africa, that figure was 43 per cent.

2. Women's participation in the labour force reflected the extent to which social and political change had affected their socio-economic role. Except in Latin America and the Caribbean, most women in the developing countries were engaged in agriculture. Their role in the production process was crucial but not fully appreciated as a result of incomplete reporting, the informal nature of their work and socio-economic prejudices. It was estimated that a large proportion of women working in agriculture, industry or the services, had more limited access than men did to capital, equipment and transportation to markets, and, hence, lower returns for their labour. Women rarely had title to agricultural holdings, and in industry and the services they typically held lower-level jobs. It was therefore essential to improve the education and training of women in a socially unbiased environment.

3. The Population Division of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA) was currently engaged in four complementary projects, funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Those projects included assembly of a computer usable data base on population policies related to the status of women and studies on the effects of international migration policies on the status of women, and of women's changing status on family planning practice, fertility and patterns of child-bearing in developing countries. Lastly, a project had been initiated to study the "feminization" of internal migration in developing countries, especially between rural and urban areas.

4. The United Nations Statistical Office continued to compile statistics on women in close co-operation with other areas of DIESA, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the United Nations Office at Vienna. The Office had issued a compendium of statistics and indicators on women in the early part of 1989 and, only recently, a shorter version on Africa.

(Mr. Ahmed)

5. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Economic and Social Council had determined that the cross-organizational programme analysis provided the most comprehensive review and analysis of the work of the United Nations system with respect to the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000. The analysis also provided baseline data and the substantive basis for monitoring the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development for the period 1990-1995 and a comprehensive review of legislative mandates and policy approaches of the United Nations system on the advancement of women.

6. Mr. HANIFF (Malaysia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States clearly stipulated the right of every State to choose its own economic, political, social and cultural system without external interference. It was regrettable that the Charter remained unimplemented for lack of will on the part of the developed countries. Since the adoption of the Charter, the economic situation of the developing countries had deteriorated, as evidenced by the widening gap between the developed and developing countries, the stagnation or negative growth of developing countries and decline in their standard of living. The fact was that developing countries were pursuing their development objectives in an unfavourable external environment, characterized by low commodity prices, external debt, deteriorating terms of trade and rising protectionism. The current international economic structure also discriminated against the developing countries with respect to market access, the transfer of technology, the flow of financial resources, direct investment and intellectual property rights.

7. Joint efforts must therefore be undertaken urgently, in a spirit of shared responsibility, with a view to revitalizing the economic growth and development of developing countries and fulfilling the objectives of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

8. Ms. LOU Xu (China) said that her delegation concurred with the report of the Secretary-General that a measure of progress had been achieved in implementing the goals of the Nairobi forward-looking strategies - equality, development and peace. In order to complete the task, strengthened international co-operation and exchange were required and in that connection, the United Nations organs had an active role to play. In China, where women made up half the population, the Government had always held that women would not be truly liberated without economic independence. Women enjoyed full equality with men under the constitution and, since 1949, had actively participated in building up the country. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the number of urban women workers in China had multiplied by 83 in a process which had stressed vocational and technical training for women and the development of their scientific and cultural knowledge and technical and management skills.

9. The All China Women's Federation had launched a number of projects for women and children with the assistance of United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and

/...

(Mr. Lou Xu, China)

the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, (INSTRAW) and the International Development Programme of Canada. Those projects, carried out in economically depressed areas where minorities lived and in remote mountain regions, focused on the promotion of agricultural technology, the training of teachers for community-financed pre-schools and the development of handicrafts.

10. The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 demonstrated the will of the international community to deal with severe housing shortages and homelessness in the world. As poverty and underdevelopment were the two main obstacles to solving the problem of human settlements, the developed countries must help to create a favourable external environment for sustainable economic recovery and development in the developing countries. Under the "enabling policies" of the Strategy, the developed countries should provide assistance in the form of capital and technology to developing countries.

11. China had always attached importance to the problem of housing for its 1.1 billion people and the improvement of housing conditions was an important aspect of its economic restructuring programme. The Government planned that by the year 2000, most urban families would have affordable apartments and most rural families would have their own houses with proper utilities. Emphasis would be placed on the enabling policy which encouraged investment by residents themselves, and on the role of local government in the use of land, project design and the construction of basic facilities. The Government was also taking measures to control population growth in urban areas, monitor housing standards and restore old residential areas with a view to achieving the goals of the Global Strategy. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the Commission on Human Settlements must actively contribute to the promotion of co-operation in the field of housing. It was also to be hoped that the international community, particularly the developed countries, would support the activities of the Centre.

12. Mr. KHALIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that there had been little progress in the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States since its adoption 15 years ago. The international community had failed to adopt adequate measures to deal with the growing number of problems in the economic, environmental and social fields. Such problems had aggravated the imbalances in international trade and economic as well as monetary and financial relations, widening the gap between the levels of development of individual groups of countries and regions. The proper implementation of the Charter had been impeded by a strong trend in favour of unilateral measures and narrow egoistic approaches by a number of States. In the opinion of his delegation, the radical change for the better in world affairs, positive developments in the field of disarmament, the emergence of a willingness to solve regional conflicts and the enhanced role of the United Nations in those areas had created favourable conditions for a universal dialogue within the Organization which could result in consensus solutions to major economic and environmental problems.

(Mr. Khalikov, USSR)

13. The world was increasingly marked by the interdependence of States, the interrelatedness of economic, environmental and social issues and a variety of development options. In such conditions, the important provision of the Charter regarding the right of every State to choose its economic and social systems was particularly relevant. International guarantees of the freedom of choice were an important condition for ensuring the normal development of international economic relations and for strengthening the principles of stability, predictability, mutual advantage and non-discrimination. Another provision of the Charter stressed the need to improve the efficiency of international economic organizations in the interests of all countries. The formulation of that international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, the preparation of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation to be held in April 1990, and the 1992 conference on environment and development provided a real opportunity to enhance the role and prestige of the Organization as an instrument for constructive multilateral dialogue and negotiations.

14. The effective mobilization and integration of women in development should continue to be carried out in the broad context of efforts to solve current international economic problems and foster international co-operation, bearing in mind the three objectives of United Nations activities to improve the status of women, namely, equality, development and peace. An analysis of the documents the Secretariat had provided on that issue made it clear that even the most decisive national measures to mobilize the participation of women in the economic development of their countries, to enhance their economic independence and to raise their standard of living were insufficient in the light of unfavourable internal social and economic conditions and in the absence of international measures to resolve the economic problems of developing countries. Structural readjustment programmes should include measures for enhancing the role of women in the development process.

15. At its second regular session of 1989, the Economic and Social Council had adopted a useful resolution on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development. An important provision of that resolution dealt with the need to focus, *inter alia*, on environment issues in the analysis of the social and economic status of women.

16. His delegation noted the intensification of international efforts with regard to human settlements, which had been enhanced in no small measure by the beginning of implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. The Soviet Union wholeheartedly supported the multifaceted work of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in the co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy. The Strategy required joint efforts on the part of all States Members, bodies and organizations of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, as well as the close scrutiny and persistent efforts of the Centre. The objectives and plans of action under the Strategy should be reflected in the Centre's preparation of future medium-term and two-year programmes of work.

/...

(Mr. Khalikov, USSR)

17. Activities in the field of information should become a central component of all efforts to carry out the Global Strategy. His delegation supported the proposal on the creation of an information infrastructure and the broad international exchange of information and relevant technologies in the area of housing construction and civil engineering. A positive development had been the growth in the overall number of technical assistance projects in the field of human settlements and the practical implementation of major initiatives in connection with the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. The Soviet Union believed that the provision of housing was a major component of national social and economic policies, since it formed an important part of broader efforts to improve living conditions.

18. Mrs. HALIMI (France), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that they attached great importance to the participation of women in economic and social development, and in the benefits of development. She drew attention to the most recent annual report of UNFPA, which called for greater attention to the specific concerns of women in development and to the costs incurred by neglecting their needs. Those costs related, *inter alia*, to population control, infant mortality and economic efficiency, particularly in the agricultural sector.

19. At the international level, obstacles to the integration of women in development were both material and cultural. As indicated at the July 1989 session of the Economic and Social Council, the European Community strongly favoured a multilateral approach to the question. It would be important both to avoid a dichotomy in which the developing world lagged behind the industrialized countries in improving the status of women and to counter the "feminization of poverty" signalled in the 1989 World Economic Survey. The situation called for continued action by the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

20. In May 1989, the European Community and its member States had adopted a three-point programme focusing on the role of women in development, the consolidation and refinement of work methods and the development of a data base for further study of the question. As stressed in the 1989 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development and in document E/1989/L.23 containing extracts from the Survey, the status of women was often at the heart of development issues. For example, because of their status, women generally earned lower incomes. The situation was particularly serious when they were heads of households as a result of male migration brought on by war and economic crises in certain countries.

21. At times, the material situation of women had deteriorated as the result of structural investment programmes which had included cutbacks in health and social programmes and in the staff of the civil service - a large employer of women. With the mechanization of agriculture and handicrafts, women had been pushed out of the labour market. Modernization policies must therefore give greater consideration to the fact that women were always the major victims of under-employment, chiefly because they held low-level jobs.

(Mrs. Halimi, France)

22. The precarious situation of women was aggravated by two factors rooted in societal attitudes. First, States did not always provide adequately for the needs of single-parent families. Second, in many countries women were excluded from the professions and relegated to the highly cyclical informal sector, where they enjoyed virtually no benefits. Such attitudes greatly aggravated the precarious financial situation of women and affected health and child mortality in the most underprivileged groups. Attitudes in certain countries, moreover, helped to keep women in quasi-marginal situations which were aggravated by changes in the overall economic situation, as in the case, for example, of their exploitation through prostitution and trafficking in women. Those phenomena were often rooted in deeply entrenched social attitudes, and it was those same attitudes which, by denying women access to advanced training, perpetrated their marginal status.

23. The United Nations should promote greater awareness of that issue, enabling women to assume their potential role as catalysts of development. Initially, efforts could focus on the traditional role of women in areas central to the development process, such as education, child care and the food and health care fields. In addition, other areas should be explored in order to ensure the better integration of women in the development process. For example, efforts must be made to ensure equality of wages and salaries, and to enable women to benefit from the liberating effects of technological change. The role of women in society would be improved indirectly, as well as directly, by enhancing women's professional qualifications and by eliminating discrimination against women. The specific culture, family role and sensitivities of women should enable them to make constructive and imaginative contributions to the decision-making process. Women played a major role in production, especially in the developing countries, and should therefore be given opportunities to increase their productivity. Development projects should take account of the role of women in production so that women could participate fully in, and reap the full benefits of, development. The inclusion of a greater number of women in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations could facilitate the Organization's consideration of such issues.

24. In operational activities, the United Nations system should fully recognize the need to integrate women in development. The activities of UNIFEM in that area were particularly important. UNDP had submitted proposals aimed at ensuring that future programmes took better account of the needs of women. The overall objective must be the long overdue full integration of women into the societies of which they formed a part.

25. The European Community supported United Nations activities to improve the situation of human settlements throughout the world, in particular the activities carried out by the Commission on Human Settlements since 1977. The Year of Shelter for the Homeless and the launching of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 were also aspects of a common process.

(Mrs. Halimi, France)

26. The implementation of the Strategy was becoming even more urgent in the light of the worsening housing situation in many countries of the South, particularly in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. The deterioration of urban centres was leading to precarious health conditions marked by the resurgence of epidemic diseases. That situation called for close co-operation between the Centre (Habitat), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNDP, the World Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The low-income countries of Asia also deserved special attention. In some Asian countries, economic booms had led to a swelling of urban populations with the concomitant problems of shanty towns and environmental degradation.

27. The Strategy should also take full account of the services and infrastructures vital to the existence of societies, and make use of such positive aspects of urbanization as economies of scale and the informal sector. The European Community and the agencies of the United Nations system were conducting a joint study on the functioning of the city, which gave priority to the role of the local authorities, the initiative of grass roots communities and the association of the public and the private sectors. A meeting devoted to the city as "agent of development" was shortly to be held in France.

28. The structural adjustments undertaken by many countries had posed special problems for the housing sector. In view of its primordial role in maintaining social stability, that sector should be managed with greater efficiency.

29. The Community noted with satisfaction that the next session of the Commission would examine the question of human settlements and its relation to sustainable development. With regard to the medium-term objective of the Centre, the stress laid on national policies and strategies seemed appropriate, in as much as the success of the Global Strategy for Shelter was linked to the implementation of suitable national policies, and in as much as indicators should be devised which were not limited to adding quantitative data. The Community commended the realistic technical documents which the Centre had submitted to the Commission, with the exception of the financial documents, which lacked clarity.

30. Mr. TJOKROWINOTO (Indonesia) said that participation of women in the development process, especially at the upper and decision-making levels, still fell short of the objectives of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Statistical evidence demonstrated that women continued to lag behind men in a broad array of socio-economic indicators, including school enrolment, nutrition and health and life expectancy in the under-50 age group.

31. The 1989 update of the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development had provided a better understanding of the emerging development issues which had an impact on the role of women in the economy. It had also made clear that the recession of the 1980s had affected practically all countries. However, Indonesia believed that the World Survey should have provided more concrete examples demonstrating the importance of identifying trends in economic development at the regional, national and international level. Such information was essential for the

(Mr. Tjokrowinoto, Indonesia)

better preparation of women to undertake a more effective role in their nation's economic development. Since a large number of female workers might remain in the informal sector for the foreseeable future, the update of the World Survey should have paid greater attention to their situation. In addition, the update should have attempted to present a number of ideas, based on the experience of Member States, on how best to improve the status and welfare of women.

32. Indonesia's national adjustment policies had, in general, succeeded in minimizing the negative impact of the adverse external environment. That had been achieved through the mobilization of both domestic and external resources and through efforts to capitalize on various new opportunities. The adjustment policies included increased flexibility of exchange rates, tighter fiscal controls and reform of the tax system. Moreover, deregulation policies in the areas of money, banking and trade had been undertaken in order to facilitate the increasing role of the private sectors, the co-operatives and the business community at large. The non-oil export drive, sound debt management and better use of resources had also been vigorously pursued. Those policies had accelerated the structural transformation of the Indonesian economy, providing women with greater opportunities to contribute to economic development. Nevertheless, the participation of women in the labour force continued to be limited to low-productivity sectors, such as small businesses and services. Their occupational profile also reflected the fact that they were concentrated in occupations with low responsibilities.

33. Much remained to be done to improve socio-economic conditions in Indonesia and enhance the role of women in development. While the Government was sparing no effort, it nevertheless required adequate external support to achieve those goals. Specific measures that needed to be taken included: providing education and skills training for unemployed women and career development services for those already in the work force; increasing women's involvement in the fields of science and technology; encouraging the full implementation by employers of legal provisions designed, *inter alia*, to protect women in their capacity as child-bearers; the development of principles and guidelines to promote social attitudes that reflected the principle of equality between men and women and to facilitate women's participation in socio-economic life. Women's economic role must not be considered in isolation from their other roles, and in particular their economic role in the family merited further study.

34. The extended session of the Commission on the Status of Women to be held in 1990 afforded an opportunity for a thorough examination of the impact of current economic problems on the mobilization of women in development. As the Secretary-General's report (A/44/290) indicated that activities for the advancement of women were highly segmented in nature, there was obviously a need for greater co-ordination. His delegation endorsed the measures for improving existing arrangements set out in paragraphs 41-49 of the report.

(Mr. Tjokrowinoto, Indonesia)

35. With regard to agenda item 82 (h), his delegation was proud to note that World Habitat Day had been commemorated in 1989 at Jakarta in recognition of Indonesia's strong commitment to the crucial problem of human settlements. His delegation fully supported the conclusions and recommendations of the Commission on Human Settlements which had been endorsed by the Economic and Social Council.

36. Ms. HJELT (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries on agenda item 82 (h), drew attention to resolution 12/18 of the Commission on Human Settlements, which sought to bring together the many different issues related to human settlements and environment and called for a special intergovernmental review of them. As the review was likely to take place in 1990, she wished to set out some of the Nordic countries' views regarding the organization and contents of that exercise.

37. The issue of human settlements and shelter was important because of its implications for the attainment of sustainable development. The linkages between urban development and sustainable development needed to be better understood. Other important issues that must be considered were how to integrate the concept of shelter for all with the concept of sustainable development and what constraints might prevent achievement of the stated goal of shelter for all by the year 2000. The implications of rapid urbanization for the rational use of natural resources and the relationship between the urban and natural environments must also be considered. Regional planning in predominantly rural districts where non-agricultural employment was increasing was yet another important consideration. All those issues and their policy implications must be analysed as a follow-up to the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development and as a contribution to the 1992 conference on environment and development.

38. A strategy for environmentally sound urbanization and regional development must be developed in close co-operation with the UNE. The strategy should constitute a refinement of the environmental aspects of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 and should be submitted to the 1992 conference.

39. The review to be held in 1990 thus represented the first step in an intergovernmental preparatory process and should be followed by an in-depth review of the concept of sustainable development when the Commission met at Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1991. Emphasis must be placed on the relationship between economic development, improving the living conditions of the poor, and the planning and management of human settlements and household energy use.

40. The intergovernmental review meeting would make a major contribution to preparations for the thirteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements as well as to the preparations for the 1992 conference. The Nordic countries were convinced that the approach taken in the Global Strategy presented the most efficient way of addressing the problem of shelter throughout the world, and therefore endorsed the appeal to Governments and United Nations bodies contained in paragraph 10 of the Commission's resolution 12/1.

41. Mrs. PERKOVIC (Yugoslavia) said that more active participation of women in development would do much to reverse the economic decline experienced by many developing countries. Unfortunately, many constraints to development, compounded by growing problems of hunger and poverty, were often so deeply ingrained as to prevent women's mobilization. The resolve of the international community to come to grips with the problems facing developing countries was therefore essential.

42. Chapter II of the 1989 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development offered a convincing argument that external debt and the adjustment measures taken to cope with it had a direct correlation to the decline in women's incomes and wages and had caused hunger and poverty to increase among women in developing countries. While it could be argued that economic problems were not the sole cause of women's growing difficulties, many of which had in fact existed for years, it was nevertheless imperative, if those problems were to be overcome, that macro-economic measures should be taken at the international level to enhance the economic environment and create adjustment policies that would stimulate growth. Measures to redress the long-standing discrimination and inequalities that had accentuated women's vulnerability during the current crisis should also be taken at the national level. Such problems had been overcome in Yugoslavia, and practical efforts were being made to integrate increasing numbers of women in the development process. Naturally, those efforts would be greatly facilitated if Yugoslavia's current economic difficulties could be overcome.

43. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies constituted the focus for the activities of the national commission in Yugoslavia which dealt with the integration of women in development. The importance of women's advancement had also been stressed at the Ninth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at Belgrade.

44. Her delegation had noted with interest the section of the World Economic Survey 1989 on the socio-economic attainment of women; that issue should be pursued in subsequent editions of the Survey, and her delegation endorsed Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/106 in that regard.

45. The Secretary-General's report (A/44/290) contained a wealth of information on steps taken to encourage the effective mobilization of women in development and showed how unsatisfactory the results achieved in that regard had been. The activities of the entire United Nations system aimed at integrating women in development must be strengthened, with particular emphasis placed on such bodies as the Commission on the Status of Women, UNIFEM and INSTRAW.

46. The special report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the year 2000 (A/44/8/Add.1) reflected the many efforts undertaken at the national, regional and non-governmental levels to implement the Global Strategy. Clearly, without appropriate international support the Strategy could not be implemented at the national level, particularly in the least developed countries. Her delegation therefore favoured all measures intended to assist those countries in that effort. At their summit conference at Belgrade, the non-aligned countries had also stressed the importance of the Global Strategy and had called on Governments to adopt and implement action-oriented national shelter strategies, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 43/181.

/...

47. Mr. MINAGAWA (Japan), said that, unlike more prominent issues such as debt, population and the environment, the issue of human settlements tended to attract little attention. Yet it was surely one of the most fundamental and urgent problems facing the international community. In view of the explosive population increase and rapid urbanization of developing countries, the provision of viable human settlements required concerted efforts and forward-looking policies on the part of all Governments and the international community as a whole. If the situation was not remedied, social and even political instability might occur in the countries concerned and the global environment could be seriously threatened. The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 was therefore a timely and important programme.

48. The role of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements would grow more important and vital in the years to come. As international co-operation in the field of human settlements took both bilateral and multilateral forms, it was essential that overlapping and duplication of co-operation activities should be avoided through close co-ordination. It was to be hoped that the Centre would continue to serve as the focal point for such co-ordination, and also encourage exchanges of information and provide professional advice in the field of human settlements. Finally, the Centre should play a leading role in the implementation of the Global Strategy.

49. Taking a long-term approach to the issue of human settlements, the Japanese Government had developed a set of long-term guidelines for action in that field which sought to enhance international co-operation for the promotion of human settlements and improve the housing situation in Japan. In the area of international co-operation, Japan had undertaken a number of projects to help developing countries promote human settlements development which involved hosting trainees, seconding experts, conducting feasibility studies and providing technical and financial assistance. Convinced of the importance of the activities of the Centre for Human Settlements, Japan had contributed \$3 million to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation over the past five years. In view of the importance it accorded to the Global Strategy for Shelter and the fact that the 1990s had been designated as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, Japan intended to promote international co-operation in the field of human settlements by working closely with international organizations such as the Centre.

50. At the national level, Japan faced many problems caused by the excessive concentration of the population and national life in Tokyo and its environs, rising land prices and the growing depopulation of rural areas. As the standard of housing in metropolitan areas in Japan was still relatively low, a law had been enacted in 1988 to ensure more balanced development within the Tokyo metropolitan region and foster dynamic development and increased prosperity in other regions. Japan also sought to increase public awareness of the issue through such activities as the observance of World Habitat Day.

51. Ms. EHRENREICH (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries on agenda item 82 (d), said that the first regular update of the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development was an impressive document, although it was unfortunate that it had arrived in the capitals of the Nordic countries only one week earlier, precluding a thorough analysis. Accordingly, her comments would only be of a general and preliminary nature. The Survey's usefulness would be enhanced if a summary of the document could be widely disseminated.

52. However, she welcomed the in-depth analysis contained in the chapter of the report dealing with women, debt and adjustment, which highlighted the social repercussions of the current economic crisis and the adjustment policies made in response to it. Unfortunately, not enough statistics broken down by gender had been provided, despite repeated requests, by the Nordic countries for their inclusion. Nevertheless, the figures provided confirmed the prevalent suspicion that the economic crisis had been experienced differently by men and women. Too often the effects of adjustment policies had been borne by the poor, with women most seriously affected. The feminization of poverty was an issue to be taken very seriously. She supported the request contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/106 that the next edition of the World Survey, to appear in 1994, should focus on socio-economic aspects. She also agreed that the section on the socio-economic attainment of women should be maintained and that statistical indicators on various key issues should be incorporated.

53. The Nordic countries endorsed the list of issues targeted in the World Survey for future study, particularly as they themselves had devoted much time and resources to tapping the underutilized potential of women in their search for solutions to the problem of environment and sustainable development. The Nordic countries would be happy to share their documentation and experience in that area.

54. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the effective mobilization and integration of women in development, she was encouraged by the steps taken in various intergovernmental bodies and welcomed in particular the elaborate arrangements for inter-agency co-ordination described in the report. All agencies should plan their activities with a view to avoiding any waste of resources. The Nordic countries attached importance to the establishment of "women in development" units within the organizations of the United Nations system.

55. She endorsed the request contained in paragraph 9 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/105 and urged that the sectoral themes to be reflected in the medium-term plan for the advancement of women should include women's legal rights as defined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Women must be informed of their rights and be able to exercise them if they were to participate fully as agents and beneficiaries in the development of their societies.

56. As the 1990s approached, the Nordic countries wished to request the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole for the Preparation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade to accord high priority to issues pertaining to women's full integration in the development process, on economic as well as social and legal grounds.

57. Mr. MAKAREVICH (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) noted his delegation's response to the call to present an evaluation of the measures taken in implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (A/44/266/Add.1 and A/44/379), and reaffirmed its importance as an instrument for the normalization of international economic relations.

58. While the vast majority of countries supported that Charter's principles of equality, full economic sovereignty of States, illegality of interference in any State's internal affairs and the duty of all States to work towards total disarmament, there had been a regrettable lack of progress in putting the principles into practice. The economic situation in the world remained unstable, and the worst social and economic problems were still unsolved. The plight of the developing countries was particularly alarming, exacerbated by lack of progress in reforming the world's currency system, fluctuating exchange rates and rising inflation.

59. In the context of the growing internationalization of all aspects of economic life, it was incumbent upon the Member States to elaborate a new, more just and better balanced structure for the international division of labour. His delegation firmly believed that one of the primary functions of the economic work of the United Nations was the implementation of the principles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

60. The documents before the Committee under item 82 (d) gave an objective picture of the present position of women in the world, and of the measures taken by the United Nations at intergovernmental and Secretariat level to involve women more closely in the process of development.

61. The updated World Survey on the Role of Women in Development identified the remaining obstacles to the full and equal participation of women in world economic activity. It had to be conceded that the real position of the majority of women in the world had deteriorated in certain aspects, and that the level of their participation in development remained unsatisfactory. His delegation believed that remedial measures to be taken in all operational areas in the context of the international development strategy for the 1990s should take into consideration the interests of women primarily by involving women more actively in their preparation and implementation.

62. The system-wide medium-term plan for women in development was a vital instrument for the full implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies by the organizations of the United Nations system. He noted with satisfaction that many of the recommendations had been adopted in the programmes and co-ordinated operations of international organizations. The international community had resolved to work together more closely within the United Nations system for the three primary objectives of the Forward-looking Strategies, equality, development and peace, and it was therefore essential to establish a clearer interrelation between development activities and measures designed to promote equality and preserve peace.

(Mr. Makarevich, Ukrainian SSR)

63. Particular importance attached to the question of regional co-operation. His delegation believed that more effective use should be made of the regional commissions of the United Nations, and in particular the European Economic Commission, to implement the Nairobi Strategies, and supported the proposal to hold world conferences on women's problems in 1995 and 2000, and to proclaim a second women's decade for the 1990s. Such measures would considerably promote the world-wide advancement of women.

64. The processes of perestroika, glasnost and democratization in his country had enabled women to play a more positive role in society, and increased their involvement in political, economic and cultural life.

65. Turning to item 82 (h), he noted the increasing importance of the issue of human settlements in the social and economic work of the United Nations. The Commission on Human Settlements had played and would continue to play a key role in extending the scope of activities in the field of housing, in establishing contacts with other specialized organizations of the United Nations, with Governments, and with national and international NGOs, and in implementing resolution 43/181 on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. His delegation commended the Commission on its first report on the implementation of that Strategy (A/44/8/Add.1), and welcomed the elaboration of a series of consecutive stages of implementation. The Ukrainian SSR also supported the Commission's resolution 12/1 on the implementation of the first stage (1981-1991) of the Strategy.

66. Environmental considerations were of great importance in drawing up programmes for the siting and construction of new industrial and housing developments, and more clearly defined co-ordination was required between the Commission's work and that of UNEP. He noted the decision by his country to cut capital investment in industrial development in order to reallocate state funds for housing development. It was intended to provide every family with a separate dwelling by the year 2000, and national long-term housing programmes accorded fully with the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

67. The CHAIRMAN noted the request by some delegations for the question of the "International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, under item 12, to be deferred to a later date and be considered in conjunction with agenda item 88, entitled "Special economic and disaster relief assistance". The Bureau considered that the Committee should concur with that request. Accordingly, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to consider the question of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction on the morning of 24 October, together with item 88.

68. It was so decided.

69. The CHAIRMAN noted the decision of the General Assembly that the debate on the proposed 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development under sub-item 82 (f), "Environment", should be held directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that action on that aspect of the sub-item would be taken by the Second Committee. The Bureau wished to suggest that delegations and representatives of organizations of the United Nations system which did not address the plenary meeting should be able to state their positions on the proposed conference during the general discussions under item 82 (f), to be held in the Committee in the morning of 23 October.

70. Ms. EHRENREICH (Denmark), also speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that they had had insufficient time to consider that proposal, and requested that discussion of it be adjourned until the following day.

71. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it the Committee wished to accede to the request made by the representative of Denmark.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.