



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Forty-eighth Session
OFFICIAL RECORDS

Wednesday, 18 February 1970,
at 10.55 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. J. B. P. MARAMIS (Indonesia).

AGENDA ITEM 6

Elections (concluded) (E/4786 and Add.1)

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOPMENT

1. The PRESIDENT recalled that the business before the Council was the appointment of the twenty-four members of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, whose term of office had been extended until the end of 1971; the Secretary-General had accordingly proposed twenty-three nominees in his note (E/4786 and Add.1). The Secretary-General also had a prospective nominee from Algeria, but had not yet received a reply from him.

2. He accordingly suggested that the Council should approve the appointment of the twenty-three nominees proposed by the Secretary-General and should authorize the Secretary-General to proceed with the appointment of a nominee from Algeria as soon as possible, on the understanding that he would inform the Council of the name and biographical data of the person selected at the forty-eighth session. The Council had followed a similar procedure at the fortieth session in the case of the appointment of a member of the Committee for Development Planning.

3. Mr. FRANZI (Italy) said that he fully approved of that procedure, as the Council had always relied on the Secretary-General in matters concerning the selection of candidates. The Council should immediately appoint the twenty-three nominees proposed by the Secretary-General, so that the Advisory Committee could begin its work as soon as possible.

4. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he shared that view, on the understanding that the appointment of the twenty-fourth nominee would be confirmed by the Council at its forty-eighth session.

5. The PRESIDENT said that, if there were no objections, he would assume that the Council appointed as members of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development the twenty-three nominees proposed by the Secretary-General in his note and authorized the Secretary-General to proceed with the appointment of a nominee from Algeria, on the understanding that

he would inform the Council of the name and biographical data of the person selected at its forty-eighth session.

It was so decided.

6. Mr. BRADLEY (Argentina) said that although his delegation had no objection with regard to the qualifications of the persons whom the Council had just appointed as members of the Advisory Committee, it was concerned at the way in which the nominees had been selected. Of the twenty-three persons whose names had been proposed by the Secretary-General, eight were doctors of medicine or specialists in that field. In the circumstances it might be wondered whether specialists in such a clearly demarcated science as medicine were really competent to deal with certain technical aspects of the problems which arose in such fields as agriculture or industry. Other branches of learning such as physics, chemistry or even mathematics would be of far greater benefit to the developing countries and those disciplines ought to be better represented in the Committee.

7. It would therefore be very useful, when the Advisory Committee received a new mandate at the end of 1971, to ensure a better balance in its membership, and consequently in the choice of nominees, so that a greater variety of scientific subjects was represented.

8. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) thanked the representative of Argentina for the interest he had shown in the question of membership of the Advisory Committee and assured him that the Secretariat was also concerned about the problem. It had to be borne in mind that, in most of the developing countries, priority was being given to the development of medicine and when competent persons in the scientific field were sought the nominees from most of those countries frequently proved to be specialists in that discipline. Nevertheless those persons had had occasion to extend their scientific knowledge in various fields, so that they could hardly be regarded strictly as doctors of medicine: they tended, in fact, to be scientific administrators, and careful study of the biographical data of the nominees proposed by the Secretary-General would show that most of them answered that description.

9. Moreover, the Secretariat had endeavoured to include among the nominees a higher proportion of economists or administrators oriented towards development problems, so that the Committee's work should be constantly geared to problems of economic and social development. Those were the guidelines which the Secretariat had followed in the highly delicate task of selecting the nominees.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.