



## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Resumed Nineteenth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

863rd Meeting

(CLOSING MEETING)

Friday, 27 May 1955,  
at 3 p.m.

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*President:* Sir Douglas COPLAND (Australia).

*Present:*

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Australia, China, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, India, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following countries: Chile, Indonesia, Iran, Uruguay.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization.

## AGENDA ITEM 17

**Population questions (E/2707 and Add.1, E/2723, E/2761)**

**REPORT OF THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE (E/2761)**

1. The PRESIDENT called the Council's attention to the report of the Social Committee (E/2761) on agenda item 17, which had been considered in committee.

2. Mr. ANIS (Egypt) observed that in economic development the main problem was how to increase production at the same rate as the growth in population. Experience had shown that a higher level of living was eventually accompanied by a reduction in the birth-rate, but that at first the population increased at a more rapid rate than the national income. Some held that demographic stability could not be achieved without State intervention and planning, others believed that too much attention should not be paid to family planning but that the stress should be placed rather on increasing production and redistributing wealth by social reforms. In under-developed countries the high proportion of non-productive manpower was a problem; the rapid population growth brought into existence a high proportion of children in relation to productive adults. In order to remedy such a state of affairs some countries allowed children to go to work

at an early age, but whatever temporary benefits that might bring were offset by the future shortage of trained adults and the consequent low rate of productivity.

3. Egypt was one of the most densely populated agricultural countries, with a surplus of agricultural labour amounting to 25 to 30 percent of the number of persons engaged in agriculture. Density of population in agricultural areas should not, however, be regarded as the only factor influencing economic development. By the use of modern methods of farming and land reform productivity might be greatly expanded. Land under cultivation could be increased in Egypt by 30 percent by new irrigation schemes. Industry and trade were held by some to be a better solution to the problems of densely populated countries than an increase in agricultural productivity, but the degree of industrialization necessary to offset the increase in population was very high and the per capita income of predominantly agricultural countries was very low. Industrialization was bound to encounter many obstacles, especially the lack of raw materials, power and capital equipment. According to some recent studies, the domestic saving necessary to raise per capita income by 2 per cent should be at least 3 per cent of the national income, assuming there was no increase in population. With a population increase of 1 per cent per year, the rate of saving should be at least 6 per cent of the national income. Capital could of course be borrowed from abroad, but servicing the debt might well become an intolerable burden on the domestic finances of the borrowing countries. Great caution should therefore be exercised in planning industrialization.

4. The Egyptian delegation attached great importance to the progress made at the World Population Conference in Rome. The Egyptian Population Commission in Cairo was carrying out a great deal of demographic research and his delegation anticipated with great interest further demographic studies undertaken by the United Nations Secretariat.

5. The PRESIDENT asked the Council to vote on draft resolution A, B and C submitted by the Social Committee (E/2761).

*Draft resolution A was adopted unanimously.*

*Draft resolution B was adopted unanimously.*

*Draft resolution C was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.*

## AGENDA ITEM 16

**Allegations regarding infringements of trade-union rights (E/2587 and Add. 1 to 5, E/2685, E/2762)**

**REPORT OF THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE (E/2762)**

6. The PRESIDENT asked the Council to vote on the draft resolutions submitted by the Social Com-

mittee in its report (E/2762) on agenda item 16, which had been considered in committee.

*Draft resolution A was adopted by 12 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution B was adopted by 9 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution C was adopted by 9 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution D was adopted by 11 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.*

7. Mr. FOMIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had fully explained in the Social Committee its position on the draft resolutions just adopted and in particular the reasons why it had objected to and voted against draft resolution B and D, which were unsatisfactory, and abstained on draft resolutions A and C, which it considered inadequate. Its position remained unchanged in the plenary meeting.

8. Mr. CHACKO (India) explained that he had supported draft resolution A because he regarded it as purely procedural; he took no stand as regards the substance of the allegations. He had abstained from voting on draft resolutions B and C because he was not satisfied that the question of the disposal of allegations against countries which did not consent to co-operate with the Council had been adequately considered and because draft resolution C did not take into account the new allegations regarding infringements of trade-union rights in Spain that had been brought to the attention of the Council. He had voted against draft resolution D, as the Council had not fully discussed the political assumption concerning East Germany, which was implied in that draft resolution.

***Calendar of conferences for 1955: second session in 1955 of the Commission on International Commodity Trade (E/2755)***

9. The PRESIDENT observed that the Council had to decide whether it would accede to the Commission's wish to hold its second session at Geneva from 28 November to 16 December 1955.

10. Mr. CUTTS (Australia) doubted whether the Commission should be allowed to hold a session at Geneva at a cost of some \$11,000. As a matter of principle, functional commissions should normally meet at Headquarters unless there was a clearly demonstrated reason for not doing so. He would reserve his position until he heard whether there was such a reason.

11. Mr. CAFIERO (Argentina) explained that by its terms of reference the Commission might hold meetings away from Headquarters when it considered that to be in the best interests of its work, subject to prior authorization by the Council. The United Nations did not pay the Commission members' travel costs. Several highly important commodity conferences were to be held in Europe during the autumn and winter and the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations was meeting at Rome late in October. It would be much easier to send experts to the Commission's session if it was held at Geneva, since they would already be in Europe. No delegation was more concerned than the Argentine with avoiding any unnecessary costs, but in the case under consideration

the expenditure was justifiable. He was not sure that the estimate had not been somewhat exaggerated; but that was a matter that his delegation would raise in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly.

12. Mr. HSIA (China) said that the Commission could not work as effectively without the documentary and other services that were available only at Headquarters. For his own delegation, a meeting in Geneva would mean much extra expense.

13. Mr. EPINAT (France), Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republic) and Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) pointed out the advantages of a session of the Commission in Europe. Experts would be able to attend meetings of other international organizations in Europe, whilst the Secretariat would be spared the difficulties of servicing the Commission's meetings at Headquarters during a General Assembly session.

14. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the proposal that the second session in 1955 of the Commission on International Commodity Trade should be held at Geneva.

*The proposal was adopted by 11 votes to 2, with 5 abstentions.*

***Arrangement of business at the twentieth session of the Council (E/L.666)***

15. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom), referring to the note by the President on the arrangement of business at the twentieth session of the Council (E/L.666), said that item 4 of the provisional agenda (E/2741) would include the reports of the specialized agencies. The executive heads of those agencies would be present and would presumably reply to general questions on their activities, but there would inevitably be many questions on matters of detail which could hardly be discussed in plenary meetings of the Council. It would therefore be expedient to appoint a co-ordination committee to deal with such matters.

16. The note by the Secretary-General (E/2680) suggested that the reports of the regional economic commissions should be considered in connexion with the item on the world economic situation; in his view, those reports should also be considered in connexion with the discussion of co-ordination under agenda item 4. Similarly, the question of membership of the regional economic commissions could more appropriately be discussed under item 4.

17. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) supported the United Kingdom representative's proposal. During the discussion at the eighteenth session on the reorganization of the Council's work, much had been made of the need for more effective ways of discussing co-ordination. The Council proposed to hold a wide discussion on co-ordination under agenda item 4; there would inevitably be points of detail in connexion with that discussion which were of great importance but which could not profitably be discussed in the Council's plenary meetings.

18. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Council's twentieth session would not necessarily bring together the same representatives as its resumed nineteenth session and it would ill become the representatives present at the current session to decide how their successors should organize their affairs. The Council could only consider the arrange-

ment of business proposed by the Secretariat; it could take no final decision on that arrangement.

19. Mr. MORALES (Argentina) said that if the Co-ordination Committee met, its meetings should not be held at the same time as those of the Economic Committee. The reports of the regional economic commissions in their general application to the world economic situation as a whole could be considered under agenda item 2 and again, in connexion with the particular activities of the individual commissions, under agenda item 4.

20. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said that the Governments of Member States were expected to send to the Council's summer sessions representatives of the highest status. Careful advance organization was essential to ensure that high-level representatives were not kept waiting in Geneva before the particular items which they had come to discuss were considered.

21. With reference to the Argentine representative's remarks, he emphasized that there was no intention of holding a substantive discussion of the regional economic commission's report in the co-ordination committee. Only organizational details would be discussed in the committee.

22. The PRESIDENT felt that the question of the establishment of a Co-ordination Committee required further study. Moreover, the point raised by the United Kingdom representative seemed to be covered in the footnote in document E/L.666. It would therefore be premature for the Council to take an immediate decision. The best course would be for the United Kingdom delegation to raise the question again at Geneva on the basis of a more concrete and detailed plan of action.

23. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said that the establishment of a Co-ordination Committee would not constitute a departure from the Council's usual practice since the Council had formed such a committee at every summer session. A decision at the current stage would help delegations plan their course of action. The United States delegation, for instance, was preparing its statements on the important and difficult question of co-ordination. The establishment of a Co-ordination Committee would enable it to confine its statement to the more important issues,

leaving points of detail to be worked out in that committee. If no committee were formed, those points would have to be dealt with in the general debate.

24. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) said that there might be some points of detail which should not be discussed either in the Economic Committee or the Social Committee and which it would be unwise to debate in plenary session. They could be dealt with by the Co-ordination Committee.

25. The PRESIDENT suggested that the footnote might be rephrased in more specific terms.

26. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) accepted the suggestion.

27. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that no action by the Council was called for. The views expressed by the United Kingdom and United States representatives would appear in the summary record of the meeting. A final decision concerning the arrangement of the Council's business at its twentieth session should be left to the delegations representing Member States at that session.

28. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) said that he would not press his point if the arguments adduced by his delegation in favour of its proposal were fully set out in the summary record.

29. He agreed with the United States representative that the main framework of the twentieth session should be decided on immediately in order to ensure the desired high-level representation.

30. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should take note of the United Kingdom proposal and the ensuing discussion concerning the desirability of establishing a Co-ordination Committee and should defer its final decision until the twentieth session. It might approve the proposed arrangement of business on that basis.

*It was so decided.*

#### ***Closure of the session***

31. The PRESIDENT declared the nineteenth session of the Council closed.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.