



CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda item 9:	
International assistance to refugees within the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (<i>continued</i>)	11
Agenda item 6:	
Development of international travel, its present increasing volume and future prospects	12

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: Brazil, Chile, Indonesia, Iran.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization.

AGENDA ITEM 9

International assistance to refugees within the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2678, E/L.656, E/L.658) (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT invited the representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to address the Council on item 9.

2. Miss SENDER (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) said that the ICFTU wholeheartedly supported international action in favour of refugees who had made every sacrifice in order to preserve their dignity and freedom. It had therefore endorsed the High Commissioner's programme of work and its General Secretary had been authorized to call upon all affiliated organizations to urge their Governments to support the programme. As a result of the appeal, free trade unions in the Netherlands had collected over 4 million guilders, which would be contributed to the High Commissioner's fund.

3. The ICFTU felt that, pending the final settlement of the refugee problem, civilized nations should grant asylum to persons who continued to fight for their beliefs. The Confederation intended to co-operate fully with the High Commissioner in his efforts to solve the refugee problem with the assistance of States which had demonstrated their interest in and devotion to that problem.

4. The PRESIDENT invited the Chairman of the Working Group appointed at the previous meeting to introduce the group's report (E/L.658).

5. Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands), Chairman of the Working Group, said that the group had agreed on several changes to be made in the draft resolution submitted by the United States (E/L.656) on the understanding that the agreement would not be binding, each delegation represented in the group having reserved the right to define its final position in the Council itself. The most important amendment (par. 1 A (vi)) concerned the administrative regulations of the United Nations Refugee Fund.

6. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) said that his Government had great sympathy with the High Commissioner in his difficult task and in his devotion to the interests of refugees. It was particularly interested in his programme and had supported the proposal to establish a new combined fund for permanent solutions and emergency aid. The United Kingdom had also been represented on the Advisory Committee, which had drafted the terms of reference of the proposed new Executive Committee.

7. It was prepared to vote in favour of the United States draft resolution, as amended by the working group (E/L.658).

8. Mr. HOTCHKIS (United States of America) proposed the insertion of the words "including the present members of the Advisory Committee" after the word "problem" in paragraph 2 A of the revised draft resolution (E/L.658). If adopted, that amendment would facilitate the election of the new Executive Committee.

9. Mr. KOS (Yugoslavia) asked for a separate vote on the United States amendment. Its effect would be to limit the election of the Executive Committee to five States which were not represented on the Advisory Committee. The Yugoslav delegation had expected to be able to vote separately for all twenty members of the new Committee. It was therefore unable to support the amendment.

10. Mr. LOUTFI (Egypt) agreed with the Yugoslav representative.

11. Mr. FORSYTH (Australia) recalled that his delegation had strongly supported a provision concerning the availability of funds for projects in the draft resolution submitted by the High Commissioner (E/2678, annex II). That provision had been omitted in the United States draft resolution (E/L.656). A compromise had been achieved in the Working Group, which had reintroduced the very important principle involved, and he was therefore able to vote for the draft resolution as amended by the Working Group (E/L.658). His delegation urged the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee to give full weight to the principle in question.

12. Mr. HSIA (China) said that he was prepared to support the Working Group's draft resolution

(E/L.658) in principle, but with certain reservations. To begin with, he agreed with much of the criticism levelled at the composition of the proposed Executive Committee, although the principle of rotation introduced into the new draft improved matters somewhat. His main reservation, however, had to do with a basic defect in the United Nations programme of aid to refugees: from the outset, as his delegation had repeatedly pointed out, that aid, supposedly international, had been confined to one group of refugees, mainly Europeans who had been driven from their homes as a result of the Second World War. He had hoped that the terms of reference of the proposed Executive Committee would be liberalized, and had been disappointed to learn that the Committee would still not be truly international in nature and that the High Commissioner's Office would still not concern itself with the problems of refugees throughout the world. The General Assembly had indicated in earlier resolutions that it might in the future extend the existing narrow scope of the High Commissioner's Office. The draft resolution before the Council, however, made no move in that direction, and he could only hope that the question would be reconsidered in the near future.

13. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the United States amendment to paragraph 2 A of the draft resolution submitted by the Working Group (E/L.658).

The amendment was adopted by 12 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions.

14. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the draft resolution submitted by the Working Group (E/L.658), as amended.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by 14 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.

15. Mr. RAJAN (India) explained that he had abstained from voting because his Government, being unable to contribute to the United Nations Refugee Fund in view of the large number of refugees whom it had to succour at home, had not wished to influence the structure of an organization it was not in a position to support.

16. Mr. KOS (Yugoslavia) said that he had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution, which he would otherwise have been able to support, because it had been radically altered by a last-minute amendment introduced in plenary meeting. He thought such a procedure improper and wished to protest against it.

17. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) remarked that he had voted against the draft resolution for reasons he had explained at the preceding meeting.

18. Mr. HAMDANI (Pakistan) said that he had voted for the draft resolution on the understanding that it would not involve any increase in the contributions of Member States to the United Nations.

19. Mr. VAN HEUVEN GOEDHART (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) thanked the Council for its action.

20. In reply to the Chinese representative, he said that, while the work of his Office was limited by its Statute, the limitation was neither geographical nor connected with the Second World War; nor was it as stringent as had been represented. The problem of Chinese refugees was, of course, very serious; he had

received a full report on it and would ask the Executive Committee to advise him whether those refugees were within his mandate. In any event, the mandate, while restricted in some ways, was already fully international.

AGENDA ITEM 6

Development of international travel, its present increasing volume and future prospects (E/2688, E/L.657)

21. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs) pointed out that the Transport and Communications Commission had already done considerable work on the subject of international travel, and drew attention to the report on its seventh session (E/2696), which the Council would consider at the resumed session.

22. Mr. HOTCHKIS (United States of America) observed that international travel was one of the best means of achieving understanding among nations. Furthermore, as his Government had pointed out in its memorandum (E/2688), international travel resulted in great economic benefits to the countries visited, and constructive measures should be taken to encourage it.

23. International travel had increased greatly in recent years, but the opportunity for still further growth was tremendous. Many unnecessary restrictions on travel had already been removed, and others should be. International travel had become one of the major factors in world trade. Thus, United States residents were spending on foreign travel a sum equivalent to roughly 10 per cent of total United States exports, and therefore supplied about one-tenth of the dollars foreign countries needed for their purchases from the United States of America. Many countries which had made a deliberate effort to build up a flourishing tourist industry had done so rapidly and their example could and should be followed by others.

24. Recognizing the importance of international travel, President Eisenhower in two recent messages to Congress had cited its cultural, social and economic significance, and had instructed the appropriate Government agencies to consider means to facilitate it. In 1954, United States residents had spent well over 1,000 million dollars on travel abroad and the figure for 1955 was expected to be still higher. In the United States itself, the travel industry was well organized.

25. Much was already being done by international and non-governmental organizations to promote international travel. The Transport and Communications Commission had done much work on the subject, leading to the preparation of several conventions which would simplify the crossing of frontiers and customs formalities. The International Civil Aviation Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Organization for European Economic Co-operation, the International Union of Official Travel Organizations and many other organizations were also doing helpful work in promoting the development of travel. Similar action was being taken on a regional basis on the American continent. Thus, at the meeting of Ministers of Finance on Economy in Rio de Janeiro in 1954, a resolution had been unanimously adopted calling for constructive action on the part of all the American Republics to promote tourism.

26. The term "tourist" should be defined clearly. In some countries it was used to mean merely a sight-seeing traveller. His delegation accepted the very broad definition in the 1954 Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring and construed it to mean a *bona fide* non-immigrant who desired to make a temporary visit to a foreign country for any legitimate purpose.
27. Programmes to attract tourists should appeal especially to countries which depended on only a few items for most of their foreign exchange. Tourism brought a relatively stable source of income, yet required only a limited investment, mainly for hotels and publicity.
28. In order to lower costs and increase the number of tourists, consideration should be given to the development of off-season travel, as prices tended to be high if there were only a few peak months.
29. Commenting on the recommendations in the memorandum (E/2688, para. 13), he particularly stressed the need for study of the current and potential travel market and its various aspects and for the preparation of an efficient development plan by each country concerned. Regional travel, in particular, should be stimulated. Strong governmental support should be given to the efforts of official and private agencies to promote tourism. Government funds should be used for the establishment of foreign promotional offices and for paid publicity. Governmental incentives should be provided for private investment in tourist hotels. Technical co-operation projects should be considered. Wide ratification of the existing United Nations conventions concerned with international travel was desirable. Means should be found for establishing greater uniformity and comparability in travel statistics, and the services of the United Nations should be made available with a view to the achievement of uniform methods of compilation. In reducing frontier formalities, the national security and welfare must be kept in mind, but any improvement in world conditions should be reflected in an easing of current restrictions.
30. International travel was a fruitful economic activity which had not received from Governments the full recognition it deserved. The enlightened self-interest of each nation could thereby develop and build a steady and increasing revenue and thus produce a higher standard of living.
31. Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands) said that he would vote for the joint draft resolution (E/L.657) provided that the provision concerning encouragement of the development of hotel facilities in operative paragraph 1 (b) was not construed as an invitation to Governments to build hotels themselves in competition with private investors.
32. He had been impressed by the United States memorandum (E/2688) and statement, and his country realized from its own experience how important international travel was to the balance of payments. A great deal of work on co-ordinating international traffic had already been done, as the memorandum showed, but the results so far had not been wholly satisfactory. There were still many complicated and costly passport and visa formalities. There were restrictive practices with regard to international bus and air lines, such as cabotage and fifth-freedom landing rights, which might be justified for the protection of national lines, but which annoyed travellers. Restrictive practices hampered the all-inclusive bus trips now becoming common in Europe. Sub-paragraphs (b) and (d) of operative paragraph 1 were therefore particularly apposite.
33. Mr. STANOVNIK (Yugoslavia) said that revenue from tourist services and the transportation of foreign travellers in Yugoslavia amounted to approximately 2,100 million dinars (\$7 million) in 1954, or about 3 per cent of total exports. In 1938 it had been 200 per cent higher. It was therefore only natural that Yugoslavia should make great efforts to increase the flow of foreign exchange; he accordingly welcomed the United States memorandum (E/2688) and statement and the joint draft resolution (E/L.657).
34. The issue before the Council was not the simple question of the absolute increase of expenditure on international travel, but the specific one of the contribution to the solution of the existing world economic problem through an increase in earnings from that export item. That meant that it was vitally important to ascertain what prospects there were of increasing revenue from tourist services in areas where increased foreign exchange was most needed.
35. The statistical tables supplied by the International Monetary Fund reproduced in the United States memorandum showed that 23 per cent of the total world tourist revenues had gone to the United States in 1953, 19 per cent to Canada, 19 per cent to Mexico and 46 per cent to Europe. It also showed how little had gone to the countries which needed it most. The statement in the memorandum that the invisible export could be encouraged with comparative ease was valid only for developed countries possessing a dense network of services.
36. The geographical distribution of the revenues derived from tourist services indicated what were the attractions for the tourist. Geographical proximity was undoubtedly a large factor, as could be seen from the high percentage obtained by Mexico and Canada. It also showed that the contemporary tourist sought modern comfort and standards, which were usually not found in the under-developed countries. The more highly developed countries had built their road system to satisfy their domestic requirements and could count upon a large volume of domestic tourism to fill the dead seasons of foreign tourism, whereas in under-developed countries the dead seasons were not exploited. Again, experience showed that the revenue from tourists was not direct and that it was not derived so much from the earnings of hotels as from the trade in luxury commodities. The revenues from the sale of handicrafts in less-developed countries were much smaller than those from luxury articles and jewellery. But the luxury industries could not be given priority in the development plans of under-developed countries because they required relatively wealthy local consumers. In many areas tourism was unprofitable while it remained simply an export industry providing services, but became very profitable at a higher level of national economic development.
37. The comparative tables also showed that the tourists who were most attracted by historical monuments and natural beauty, with which the under-developed countries were amply supplied, were persons with medium incomes who did not greatly increase the inflow of foreign exchange, whereas the wealthier tourists were attracted by luxurious resorts.

38. Another aspect of international travel in relation to world economy was its great sensitivity to the state of the economy. Spending on foreign tourism showed a particular tendency to rise during economic booms. The statement in the memorandum to the effect that, if the proportion of the national income of the United States which had been spent on foreign travel in 1929 had been spent on it in 1954, the amount would have increased to about \$2,500 million instead of the current \$1,200 million was theoretically correct, but far too abstract. Conversely, tourist expenditure tended to contract in periods of crisis when the need for "invisible exports" became greatest.

39. The character of tourism had changed in recent times. In 1938, some 287,000 tourists had stayed an average of 5.4 days and nights in Yugoslavia. In 1954, the frontier had been crossed by twice as many automobiles as in 1953. Tourists were becoming more mobile, visited more countries and were making fewer secondary expenditures.

40. That mobility gave rise to the question of earnings from transportation services. Most of the larger air and shipping lines were owned by the more highly developed countries. The fact that they were generally subsidized by the State showed that they were unlikely to be profitable for under-developed countries.

41. The Yugoslav delegation was not in any way opposed to the development of tourism and action thereon by the Council, but was merely stressing its

view that special account should be taken of the needs of those countries which most required foreign exchange. In Yugoslavia the steps recommended in Council resolution 537 B (XVIII) were in effect; passport formalities had been simplified to the utmost, no duties were levied on incoming motor vehicles and foreign tourists were given certain currency and transportation privileges.

42. His delegation supported all the recommendations made in the United States memorandum (E/2688, para. 13). In connexion with recommendation 4, Yugoslavia was especially interested in obtaining international loans for the construction of tourist hotels, which could not be given priority in economic development. They were profitable, they were not non-self-liquidating projects and they yielded revenues in foreign exchange and were thus not open to many of the objections raised with regard to the financing of other projects. It was to be hoped that the regional economic commissions would continue to pay attention to that matter. Resolution No. 3 adopted by the Transport and Communications Commission at its seventh session (E/2696, para. 84) would go far towards putting into effect the steps proposed in recommendation 8 in the United States memorandum.

43. His delegation would support the joint draft resolution (E/L.657).

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.