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General review of the development and co-ordination of the economic, social and human rights programmes and activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies as a whole:

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(b) Reports of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

General debate (*concluded*) 113

President : Mr. C. W. A. SCHURMANN (Netherlands).

Present :

Representatives of the following States: Afghanistan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Spain, Sudan, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela.

Observers for the following Member States: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan, United Arab Republic, Yugoslavia.

Observers for the following non-member States: Federal Republic of Germany, Holy See, Switzerland.

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 Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization, International Telecommunication Union, World Meteorological Organization.

The representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

AGENDA ITEM 3

General review of the development and co-ordination of the economic, social and human rights programmes and activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies as a whole

(a) Appraisal of the scope, trend and costs of the programmes of the United Nations, specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency in the economic, social and human rights fields (E/3360/Rev.1, E/3342, E/3343, E/3344, E/3345, E/3346 and Corr.1, E/3347 and Corr.1)

(b) Reports of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (E/3332, E/3350, E/3353, E/3364 and Add.1, E/3365, E/3368, E/3377 and Add.1 and 2, E/3378 and Add.1, E/3380 and Add.1, E/3388, E/3390)

GENERAL DEBATE (*concluded*)

1. Mr. PAZHWAK (Afghanistan) agreed with the representatives who had spoken earlier of a new era in the history of the activities of the United Nations family and had emphasized the need for further co-operation to meet the rapidly growing requirements. It was gratifying that the needs of the under-developed countries had been particularly stressed in view of their special interest in the discussion on programme appraisals.

2. In the first place, the Council should consider how much of the programme of the United Nations and its agencies had actually been carried out and how much had remained on paper. Secondly, it should examine carefully the institutional arrangements and decide how to strengthen existing institutions for the purpose of increased efficiency.

3. Many speakers had stated that the achievements, though considerable, represented only a fraction of what was required. That deficiency was due in no small measure to the impact of the cold war and the resulting international tension, which had not received the emphasis it deserved. There had been criticism of some of the activities of the United Nations and its agencies. His was a country which had received a minimum of assistance from international organizations, but it had nevertheless profited from their activities, and its government felt that the difficulties they had to contend with should be borne in mind. Without additional resources it would be difficult for the international organizations to improve their efficiency. In the circumstances, with the cold war diverting resources away from the international organizations, it was difficult to see how the financial situation could be made fully satisfactory. On the other hand, the requirements of the under-developed and emerging countries were such that they could not be left unsatisfied. In his statement to the Council at the 1119th meeting, he had mentioned some of the faults which should be corrected; those who championed the cause of the development of the under-developed countries should remember that the best way of helping them was to strengthen the United Nations family so that it could meet the requests for its assistance.

4. To be able to help the under-developed countries, it was essential that representatives of the United Nations should have the opportunity to study conditions on the spot. If efficiency was to be increased, therefore, it was

highly important to reinforce the offices of the United Nations and its agencies in the under-developed countries. Personal visits, particularly by the heads of the various specialized agencies, had always proved most useful.

5. Any abrupt change in the organization of the United Nations family would do more harm than good, particularly as far as the under-developed countries were concerned. Stability and continuity were essential in carrying out development programmes.

6. More attention should be paid to the working arrangements of the Council itself; Under the existing system many of the documents submitted to the Council never received the attention they deserved. There had been considerable discussion about the possibility of increasing the number of members of the Council, but that course alone would not solve the problem.

7. His delegation's views on the statement made at the 1122nd meeting by the Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs on behalf of the Secretary-General would be made known at a later stage.

8. As to the consolidated report (E/3347 and Corr. 1), part I was clear and systematic. With regard to part II, the importance of statistical data as a basis for establishing development programmes should be stressed. The United Nations and its specialized agencies should therefore consider increasing their assistance to under-developed countries for the establishment or improvement of statistical services. The training of skilled personnel was also of great importance, and he had been impressed by the statement made at the 1123rd meeting by the representative of the Universal Postal Union in that connexion. It would be helpful if the other agencies were to follow the example of the Union and expand as far as possible their assistance for the training of officials and students.

9. It was encouraging to note the emphasis the report placed on the role of the regional commissions in promoting industrialization and increased productivity (para. 185); the efforts made by the various specialized agencies in that direction deserved appreciation.

10. It was gratifying to see from part III of the report that several specialized agencies emphasized the importance of regional offices and were planning to establish such offices in the under-developed areas.

11. The report showed that, apart from individual development programmes, there was need for balanced economic and social development. The agencies which had paid special attention to that feature should be commended.

12. Mr. RIVET (Deputy Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization), introducing the WMO report for 1959 (E/3350), said that the Third World Meteorological Congress had taken place in 1959. The Congress which met at intervals of four years, had, on that occasion, instructed the Executive Committee, among other things, to prepare a draft plan for the development of the world network of land and maritime meteorological stations, with particular attention to the tropical zone and the southern hemisphere. The directives issued by the Congress had already yielded results and,

thanks to help from the Special Fund, three Latin American countries had undertaken to expand and modernize their national network of hydrometeorological stations. That would mean a considerable improvement in the world network of meteorological stations. In Africa the maintenance of existing stations in several countries involved the problem of training local technicians and staff.

13. Technical achievements in 1959 included the inauguration of the high-speed teletype link between Moscow and New Delhi. With the establishment of further links it would become possible in the near future to create a data exchange system encompassing the northern hemisphere, and WMO was investigating the possibility of establishing similar links in the southern hemisphere.

14. The organization's work under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance had continued to grow in 1959. The Third Congress had pointed out that owing to the limited funds available to WMO under the Expanded Programme, only a small part of the requirements for technical assistance could be covered. The Congress had adopted resolution 11 (Cg-III), expressing the hope that a planning share of at least \$500,000 could be allocated to WMO. The Technical Assistance Committee had given favourable consideration to the difficulties of WMO and similar organizations and had decided to invite the Executive Chairman of the Technical Assistance Board to adjust if possible the planning shares of small organizations.¹ Although the \$500,000 per annum level had not been reached, it had been possible to extend WMO technical assistance to countries which had not previously been able to receive it.

15. In its resolution 743 A (XXVIII), the Economic and Social Council had drawn the attention of governments to the opportunities presented for technical co-operation in hydrometeorology following the establishment of the Technical Commission for Hydrological Meteorology (E/3350, para. 1.5.6). A great many countries had replied favourably to the joint invitation issued by the Economic and Social Council and the World Meteorological Organization, and currently the Commission consisted of ninety-three experts from forty-six countries. It would draw up a programme of work for the next four years during the session to be held at Washington in April 1961. WMO had also taken part in the hydrological work undertaken in the Lower Mekong Basin and in setting up several hundred rain-gauge stations (*ibid.*).

16. Numerous conferences on oceanographic subjects had been held in 1959 between WMO and the specialized agencies concerned. The Executive Committee had instructed a panel of experts to prepare detailed plans for a world tidal-wave warning service.

17. With regard to outer space studies, the meteorological satellite launched by the United States on 1 April 1960, which was equipped with two television cameras, had made some 300 orbits and taken 6,000 photographs in the first three weeks of its flight. One result had been to reveal a very broad structural similarity between tropical cyclones and the great atmospheric disturbances which

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-eighth session, Annexes, agenda item 7, document E/3298, para. 32.*

occurred in extratropical regions; spiral cloud formations typical of tropical cyclones were clearly visible also on many photographs of temperate-zone disturbances with a diameter of 2,500 km or more. A WMO panel of experts had been actively engaged in further work to discover what information could be obtained with the help of satellites. It had also studied the question of publicizing information obtained from the satellites, especially in regard to tropical cyclones.

18. The meteorological aspects of atomic energy had been the subject of numerous studies (E/3350, para. 6.2.7), and at the request of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, twelve experts had been nominated by WMO to take part in a discussion on the atmospheric transport and fallout of radio-active waste.

19. In addition to the information in the WMO report, it should be noted that since June 1960 the secretariat services had been occupying the building erected by the Swiss authorities. The Executive Committee had held its twelfth session there and the buildings had been officially opened on 12 July 1960. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the WMO Convention, a pamphlet had been published, in the four official languages of WMO, describing the aims and work of the organization during its first ten years.

20. Lastly, WMO maintained excellent relations with the other specialized agencies and practical co-ordination had been established among the secretariats at the different levels.

21. Mr. VASCONSELLOS (Brazil) said that his Government had devoted considerable attention in the past to the question of co-ordination. There had been certain instances of unco-ordinated efforts in previous years, but the situation had now improved considerably. The lack of co-ordination had two aspects, namely actual overlapping and insufficient contact between agencies engaged in different aspects of similar activities. The establishment, under Council resolution 694 D (XXVI), of the Committee on Programme Appraisals had been a most important step towards improved co-ordination, and that Committee was to be congratulated on its excellent work. Some delegations had expressed certain criticisms of the consolidated report (E/3347 and Corr.1) but, in the short time at its disposal, the Committee could not have produced a better or more comprehensive document.

22. Possibly the most important section of the report was part IV C which dealt with concentration of efforts and co-ordination. An example of the general trend towards simplification and streamlining brought about by the five-year appraisal was provided by the Mediterranean project of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in which the groundwork had been laid by that specialized agency. The project was now being taken over by individual governments. Another instance of streamlining in the very best sense had been given in the statement made at the 1125th meeting by the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO). All the dead wood should be cut out of the programmes of the specialized agencies so that efforts could be concentrated on work of major importance. That was of course by no means an easy task.

23. Although in the beginning the main concern had been with the duplication of activities, what was currently needed was adequate planning and programming for development. The Committee on Programme Appraisals had itself stressed that fact (*ibid.*, para. 360), and the Brazilian delegation considered it to be of the utmost importance.

24. His delegation had often expressed the view that industrialization was the basic solution to the problem of development. The Brazilian Government had put that theory into practice and the results had shown that, through industrialization, the standards of living of under-developed countries could be improved, even if the process was accompanied by some economic imbalance or inflation. For example, great strides had been made within a very short time by the automobile industry in Brazil and that country had also become the sixth nation to achieve technological independence in nuclear science. Industrialization was thus the shortest and surest way to economic development, and co-ordination in planning industrial development was therefore vital.

25. As many representatives had said during the debate, co-ordination was not an end in itself. Its object should be the concentration of efforts in order to achieve speedy development of the under-developed countries through multilateral assistance. It should not, however, lead to undue rigidity or to excessive concentration of powers in a single body. Although a great deal had already been achieved by the Co-ordination Committee of the Council, much remained to be done. The important work of the Committee on Programme Appraisals must not be set aside, but should be followed up and put to the best use. At the same time care must be taken to see that the co-ordination efforts were not themselves duplicated.

26. Mr. de SEYNES, Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs,² said that the question of co-ordination and streamlining was of more direct concern to the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies than to any other United Nations body. As early as 1954 a report by the Secretary-General on the subject³ had received the unanimous approval of the Council (resolution 557 A (XVIII)) and the principles he had stated therein had subsequently been endorsed by the General Assembly (resolution 886 (IX)). Since that time, the Secretary-General's recommendations had been largely applied: the Economic and Social Council and the regional commissions had reduced the number of their subsidiary organs, and the meetings of those subsidiary organs had been spaced out and their programmes lightened. It would be paradoxical at that stage to reverse the trend, even for the sake of co-ordination tasks. At the Council's twenty-sixth session, during the discussion on the proposed appraisals, he had maintained that the Council and the Committee on Co-ordination had sufficient facts at their disposal. His view had not been accepted, and the Council had expressed the desire to have an overall picture of the activities of the United

² The full text of the statement by Mr. de Seynes was distributed as document E/L.877/Rev.1.

³ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Eighteenth session, Annex, agenda item 29, document E/2598.*

Nations and the specialized agencies (resolution 694 D (XXVI)). That picture was available but apparently considered inadequate, since it was being proposed to set up a permanent committee of experts to analyse and summarize the various activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Yet co-ordination was not going through a crisis; on the contrary, it was flourishing. Not only had interorganization meetings been held during the Council's thirtieth session to study commodity questions, economic projections, social problems and so forth, but the various agencies had developed a real consultation reflex. There were crises in other fields. For example, the United Nations Secretariat was short of the necessary resources, and had been working for several years very much above capacity; meanwhile, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had just reduced the credits requested by the Secretary-General in his draft budget for 1961 by \$500,000, although the Secretary-General had explained that his proposals fell far short of meeting real needs. That being so, any additional expenditure on co-ordination would be to the detriment of other tasks that the Council had much at heart.

27. At earlier meetings certain representatives had rightly drawn a distinction between technical and political co-ordination. The Secretariat was mainly qualified to ensure technical co-ordination. However, the distinction drawn had not always been acknowledged by the Co-ordination Committee, which should have paid more attention to political co-ordination.

28. In the future, governmental co-ordination should mistrust a global approach and choose rather an approach by sectors. Moreover, co-ordination should be applied only to substantive questions. In that connexion, the terms of reference of the Social Commission might be reviewed in the light of the activities of certain specialized agencies. Similarly, as regards public administration and the training of instructors, the Secretariat stood in serious need of recommendations on general policy.

29. In conclusion, the important thing at that stage was not to set up a general committee but rather to refer the co-ordination problem to the appropriate existing organs — e.g. to ask the Social Commission to deal with certain questions on which better co-ordination might be achieved and, in fields where there was no specialized organ, to set up groups of experts in order to clear the way for the Council and the Co-ordination Committee.

30. Mr. GARCÍA de LLERA (Spain) congratulated the Committee on Programme Appraisals on having produced, in its consolidated report (E/3347 and Corr.1), an interesting and helpful review of the trends which the activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies were likely to follow in coming years. The Committee recognized (*ibid.*, para. 310) the limitations imposed on its work by the autonomy of the organizations concerned and the impossibility of predicting the decisions of their governing bodies. The report emphasized the need for increasing the efforts of governments to meet expanding needs and to raise levels of living. Due emphasis had

been placed on the problems of the under-developed countries, whose populations were growing most rapidly and a large proportion of whose inhabitants were living at a bare subsistence level. The Committee had expressed the view that the report might be a step in the dynamic process by which the United Nations and its specialized agencies were becoming increasingly effective instruments for stimulating the economic growth of all countries at a greatly accelerated tempo. It was to be hoped that that process would be carried through with the least possible delay.

31. The ultimate value of the report would depend on the measures taken by the Council, the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and by the governments of Member States. It was essential that all measures adopted should be fully co-ordinated. The Committee rightly pointed out (*ibid.*, para. 354) that the results of streamlining had hitherto been inadequate. There was still much to be done by way of reducing the number of meetings held, of spacing them more widely and of cutting down the number of reports issued. The adoption of some of the suggestions in paragraph 355 would do much to overcome existing difficulties. The holding of an undue number of meetings, for example, placed a heavy burden not only on international secretariats but also on the governments concerned. To yield its maximum effectiveness, streamlining would have to be accepted as a guiding principle by all concerned. Administrative costs should likewise be reduced to a minimum. At a time when some countries, including his own, were applying austerity policies in order to meet developmental needs, it was inconsistent that they should be asked to meet increased expenditure in the international field. No new international bodies should be set up unless they were clearly absolutely necessary and would be useful to all concerned. He agreed with previous speakers who had expressed the view that where increased contributions were involved, they should be voluntary and should fall in the first place on the more developed countries.

32. His own experience, first as an observer for Spain and now as its representative in the Council, had shown him that, in spite of much talk about co-ordination, the progress achieved was still well below minimum requirements. It was gratifying to see that in some cases it was governments which were urged to effect improvements in the co-ordination of their activities — a point to which the French representative had referred at the 1125th meeting.

33. The achievements of the specialized agencies in their particular fields of competence were to be commended. The International Labour Organisation (ILO), for example, constantly displayed the sense of responsibility which was appropriate in so long-established a body. The Director-General of the International Labour Office was acutely alive to current needs and had most appropriately seen to it that the interesting problem of youth and work had been placed on the agenda of the ILO Conference. The Director-General had also shown commendable initiative in connexion with the establishment of the International Institute of Labour Studies (E/3378).

34. The document devoted to the appraisal of the programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the period 1959-1964 (E/3343), in addition to providing a helpful indication respecting future lines of development, was also a conspectus of UNESCO's achievements over the past ten years. The principle of equitable geographical distribution should be borne in mind in admitting the participation of certain non-governmental organizations in UNESCO's work. The interest taken by Spain in UNESCO was reflected in the activities of the Spanish National Committee, which had set up a number of subsidiary bodies to deal with particular aspects of educational, scientific and cultural development.

35. He had followed attentively the work of WHO, the International Telecommunication Union and WMO and was in a position to confirm the statements which had been made by their representatives, at the 1125th and at the current meeting, concerning the range and effectiveness of their programmes. The four-year budgeting procedure followed by WMO was a most effective means of preventing annual budgetary increases. The establishment by the Third Congress of WMO of the Technical Commission for Hydrological Meteorology (E/3350, para. 1.5.6), the close co-operation between that organization and UNESCO in arid zone research (*ibid.*, para. 6.2.2) and WMO's humid tropics research programme (*ibid.*, para. 6.2.3) were developments which deserved special mention.

36. The International Atomic Energy Agency had done much to dispel anxiety about radiation hazards resulting from the increasing use of atomic energy. The various measures taken by the agency to establish safety standards in the transport and disposal of radio-active material (E/3365, paras. 63 and 64) also represented a valuable contribution to human welfare.

37. A matter which had caused his delegation some concern was that the references to disarmament in certain reports might be misused for purely propaganda purposes, since the possibility of achieving effective disarmament was unfortunately still very remote. The large number of campaigns, such as the World Refugee Year, the Free the World from Hunger Campaign, might have the regrettable effect of misleading world opinion into thinking that the vast and long-standing problems with which they were concerned could be solved in the space of a year or so.

38. His delegation agreed with the conclusion of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) that the main task facing the United Nations and its specialized agencies was to ensure that they were ready to meet the increasing needs of the international community. Thorough and realistic studies should be made

to identify those needs and to prepare measures for dealing with them as rapidly and efficiently as possible. A point might be reached at which some reduction of existing machinery would be desirable, but, before any such step was taken, it should be clearly established that the body or bodies in question were not meeting a real need. In any event, flexibility should be maintained in order to enable international bodies to grapple successfully with any new demands that might be made upon them.

39. Dr. CANDAU (Director-General, World Health Organization) expressed his whole-hearted agreement with the statement made on co-ordination by the Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs. Long experience as a member of the ACC had convinced him that there was no crisis in the matter of co-ordination. The executive heads of the specialized agencies had achieved a most gratifying degree of co-operation within the ACC. The best place for the representatives of governments to form a just appreciation of what had been achieved by way of co-ordination was within the intergovernmental bodies of the specialized agencies themselves. Much could be done to allay the anxieties which had been expressed during the debate if governmental representatives in the specialized agencies worked more closely with their delegations to the Council and if those delegations were to make more use of the knowledge and experience gained by their governmental representatives in the agencies.

40. Mr. JENKS (International Labour Organisation) expressed his agreement with what had been said by the representative of WHO. The ILO would be glad to co-operate in working out generally acceptable proposals along the lines indicated by the representative of the Secretary-General.

41. Mr. TERENCE (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) indicated his entire agreement with the statement made by the representative of the Secretary-General.

42. Mr. SCHWEITZER (Chile) hoped that the fact that his delegation had not participated in the debate would not be construed to mean that it did not warmly appreciate the achievements of the specialized agencies.

43. He agreed with the representative of the Secretary-General that co-ordination was flourishing. Everything possible should be done to encourage further efforts by the specialized agencies in the same direction.

44. The PRESIDENT declared closed the general debate on sub-items 3 (a) and 3 (b) of the agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.