

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION FOR 1974

Summary records of the 1887th to 1891st meetings, held at Headquarters,
New York, from 7 to 10 January 1974

1887th meeting

Monday, 7 January 1974, at 11.10 a.m.

Temporary President: Mr. Sergio Armando FRAZÃO (Brazil).

E/SR.1887

Opening of the session

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT declared open the 1974 organizational session of the Economic and Social Council and welcomed the representatives of the Council's new members.

AGENDA ITEM I

Election of Officers

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

2. Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden) nominated Mr. Aarno Karhilo (Finland) as President.

3. Mr. OLIVERI LOPEZ (Argentina), Mr. ŠMÍD (Czechoslovakia), Mr. GABRE-SELLASSIE (Ethiopia) and Mr. TAIHITU (Indonesia) supported the nomination.

Mr. Karhilo (Finland) was elected President by acclamation.

4. The PRESIDENT thanked the Council for having elected him to preside over the Council in its first full year of operation with its enlarged membership. 1974 would witness important progress towards reinstating the Council as the primary organ for the pursuance of the objectives contained in Chapters IX and X of the Charter.

5. For the purposes of the current session—the organization of the Council's work for 1974—resolutions 1768 (LIV) and 1807 (LV)—provided important guidelines for streamlining the programme of work. The implementation of all the provisions of those resolutions would, of course, require a review of some of the rules of procedure, but certain immediate tasks emerged from those two texts. In the words of resolution 1768 (LIV), 1974 was an "alternate year" when, instead of concentrating on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Develop-

ment Decade, the Council should concentrate on the examination of problems and areas of current or potential significance for development and international co-operation. The Council was also required under that resolution to carry out a comprehensive policy review of operational activities throughout the United Nations system. The Council would probably wish to do that work by reviewing in depth selected aspects of the operational activities of the system. In addition, the Council was required under that resolution to undertake certain organizational work, such as a review of the arrangements with the specialized agencies, the future organization of the functions of co-ordination and programming and the question of structural changes.

6. The basic element of resolution 1807 (LV) was the decision to concentrate on a limited number of major policy issues which required action-oriented discussions by the Council. The draft programme of work prepared by the Secretariat (E/5437 and Corr.1) conformed with the intention underlying paragraph 5 of resolution 1807 (LV) and constituted a very good basis for discussion. A common feature of both resolutions was the Council's clearly expressed desire to make greater use of its elected officers. The intention was not to create a closed steering committee which would impose its wishes on the Council; indeed, those resolutions referred explicitly to the necessity for continuous consultations among all members of the Council and with the Secretariat. The additional tasks of the President and officers should be seen as a means of facilitating the work of the entire Council. The existing rules of procedure made such consultations difficult, and he hoped that the Council would very soon be able to review the rules of procedure with a view to making full use of the new flexible approaches decided upon in 1973. The first series of consultations in accordance with resolution 1807 (LV) might be arranged for the following day.

ELECTION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENTS

7. Mr. FACK (Netherlands) proposed the suspension of rule 20 of the rules of procedure in order to enable the Council to elect four vice-presidents instead of three. To do so would enable all the regional groups to be represented among the officers of the Council and would materially assist the Council in coping with its heavier workload. Moreover, under its resolutions 1768 (LIV) and 1807 (LV), the Council had already entrusted its officers with more active consultation and co-ordination.

It was so decided.

8. The PRESIDENT said that it was the practice of the Council when there was only one nomination for a given post to elect the representative by acclamation or, if any member so requested, by show of hands. If the Council agreed, that procedure would be followed.

It was so decided.

9. Mr. OGISO (Japan), supported by Mr. BERLIS (Canada), nominated Mr. Iqbal Ahmad Akhund (Pakistan).

10. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), supported by Mr. JAIN (India), nominated Mr. L. Šmíd (Czechoslovakia).

11. Mr. FRAZÃO (Brazil), supported by Mr. CZAR-KOWSKI (Poland), nominated Mr. Víctor Barceló Rodríguez (Mexico).

12. Mr. AKE (Ivory Coast), supported by Mr. GRANIER DOYEUX (Venezuela), nominated Mr. Zewde Gabre-Sellassie (Ethiopia).

Mr. Akhund (Pakistan), Mr. Šmíd (Czechoslovakia), Mr. Barceló Rodríguez (Mexico) and Mr. Gabre-Sellassie (Ethiopia) were elected Vice-Presidents by acclamation.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Adoption of the Agenda (E/5439)

13. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that three questions were to be considered under item 6 (Calendar of meetings). The Secretary-General had begun consultations regarding the first session of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, and proposed to request the authorization of the Council to set a date and place for the session, in consultation with the members of the Commission and the President. Secondly, the Secretary-General proposed that the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Food Conference should be held from 11 to 15 February 1974 at Headquarters. Thirdly, there were difficulties about convening the Third Meeting of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration in September 1974 in New York, and the Secretary-General accordingly suggested that it should be postponed until 10-18 March 1975.

The agenda was adopted.

AGENDA ITEMS 3 AND 4

Actions arising from decisions of the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session (E/L.1573)

Basic programme of work of the Council for 1974 and consideration of the provisional agenda for the fifty-sixth session (E/5437 and Corr.1)

14. The PRESIDENT drew attention to resolution 1807 (LV) calling for consultations involving members and officers of the Council and the Secretariat, aiming at the formulation of an agenda of not more than 15 items. He suggested that, after members had made specific comments and received answers to any questions they might raise, informal consultations should be held on the basis of Conference Room Paper No. 1. The officers would then work out a draft programme of work for consideration by the Council as a whole.

It was so decided.

15. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council), introducing documents E/5437 and Corr.1 and E/L.1573, pointed out that in resolution 1807 (LV) the Council had requested the Secretary-General, when preparing the programme of work for the year, to arrange agenda items in an integrated manner, so that similar and connected issues could be discussed under a single heading. Accordingly, the programme for the entire year had been received and suggestions regarding the timing for the consideration of a number of items were submitted in paragraph 20 of document E/5437. That document also contained the lists of substantive items for the fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh sessions. All but two of the items that the Council had decided to include in the 1974 programme had been retained; actions of the General Assembly requiring additions to the programme were listed in document E/L.1573. The reasons for the exclusion of the items entitled "Unified approach to development analysis and planning" and "Question of the establishment of a special protein fund" were given in paragraph 21 of document E/5437. For the reasons indicated in paragraph 23, the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit had not been listed as separate items. The Council was, however, free to alter that arrangement and, if the reports contained recommendations for specific action, they could be included when the Council considered its provisional agenda. In view of recent changes that had taken place in the Council's membership and procedures, it was suggested that a thorough review of the rules of procedure should be undertaken at the fifty-sixth session. Moreover, in view of recent decisions concerning assistance to Zambia and aid to the Sudano-Sahelian populations, the Council might wish to decide whether one or both items should be considered during 1974 and at which sessions.

16. The reports of the Population Commission were to be considered at the fifty-sixth session under the item on population questions. The report on the Commission's seventeenth session, however, contained a recommendation which required a decision by the Coun-

cil at the current session. The recommendation was that the report of the World Population Conference, scheduled for submission to the Council and the General Assembly in 1975, should be on the agenda of the resumed fifty-seventh session and that it should be transmitted to the Assembly at its twenty-ninth session.¹ If the recommendation was endorsed, a new item entitled "World Population Conference" would have to be added to the agenda of the resumed fifty-seventh session.

17. The title of item 2 on the list for the fifty-sixth session should be changed to "World Food Conference" and the report to be submitted in accordance with resolution 1760 (LIV) should be considered in that context. Under item 3 on the list (Housing, building and planning), the report on the establishment of an international fund or financial institution for human settlements, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2999 (XXVII), should be included. With regard to the proposed United Nations conference for an international convention on adoption law (item 4 (c)), in view of the fact that only 22 replies had been received so far to the questionnaire on the subject, the Secretariat suggested that the report should be postponed until 1975. In item 6 (Human rights questions), the first subitem should be "Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination". Under item 7 (Rationalization of the work of the Council), the Council might wish to add a subitem entitled "Strengthening of the capacity of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in connexion with public finance and financial institutions". Finally, an item on permanent sovereignty over natural resources should be added to the agenda in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3171 (XXVIII).

18. With regard to the list of agenda items for the fifty-seventh session, the Secretary-General had tentatively suggested that the Council might discuss the question of the impact of multinational corporations on the development process and on international relations as the subject "of present or potential significance for development and international co-operation" for the "alternate" year of 1974. The report to be submitted under General Assembly resolution 3174 (XXVIII) should be added to those to be considered under item 4 (b) and that required in accordance with resolution 3169 (XXVIII) should be added to the subjects listed under item 4 (c). In addition, another subitem, on preparations for the mid-term review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy should be added to item 4 in pursuance of resolution 3178 (XXVIII). With regard to item 5 (Operational activities for devel-

opment), since resolution 1768 (LIV) on rationalization of the Council's work gave no indication as to the kind of document which would be needed for that item or the procedure for its consideration, it was suggested that those subjects should be discussed at the current session, so that the Secretariat might begin its preparations. Under subitem 5 (c) (United Nations Capital Development Fund) the Council would have before it a report by the Secretariat in pursuance of resolution 3122 (XXVIII) concerning further ways and means to use most effectively the resources of the United Nations Capital Development Fund first and foremost for the benefit of the least developed among the developing countries. In addition, a subitem entitled "United Nations Volunteers programme" should be added. Under item 7 (Industrial development co-operation), the Council would have before it a report on the second General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. With regard to item 10 (Tourism), a letter had been received from the Secretary-General of the International Union of Travel Organizations (IUOTO) transmitting the request by the twenty-third General Assembly of IUOTO for a one-year postponement of the submission of the study on the impact of international tourism on the economic development of developing countries. However, the Council would still have two reports before it, one of them on the implementation by IUOTO of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), on the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations, and another on the status of the statutes of the World Tourism Organization. Lastly, there should be added to the list, as a result of decisions taken by the General Assembly, two new items, entitled "Special session of the General Assembly devoted to development and international economic co-operation" and "World Food Conference".

19. Turning to document E/L.1573, he drew attention to the suggestion (sect. B, para. 9) that the Council might wish to refer the question concerning formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets to the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination or, if that body were dissolved, to whatever organ took over its functions. In the list in section C of General Assembly decisions that would require action by the Council in 1975 or later, the special session of the General Assembly had inadvertently been omitted.

20. He pointed out that as a result of the constant growth of the Council's activities and the institutional pluralism of the system, in 1974 the Council would have to consider no fewer than 72 questions. It was imperative, therefore, for the Council to seek ways of improving its working methods. Fortunately, recent Council decisions indicated that it intended to do so.

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 3, chap. I, sect. A, part 1.*

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.