

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Fourteenth Session, 576th

MEETING

Friday, 23 May 1952, at 11 a.m.

OFFICIAL RECORDS

NEW YORK

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**President:** Mr. S. Amjad ALI (Pakistan).

**Present:** The representatives of the following countries:

Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Observers from the following countries:

Chile, Netherlands.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies:

International Labour Organisation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

**Question raised by the representative of Poland regarding the participation of several representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions in the work of the Council**

1. Mr. BIRECKI (Poland) drew the Council's attention to a Press report concerning the World Federation of Trade Unions, a non-governmental organization with consultative status in category A. It appeared that some of the Federation's representatives, the President, Mr. Di Vittorio, Mr. Eskandary, editor of the WFTU publications and Mr. Santi, Secretary of the Italian Federation, had been prevented from attending the Council meetings.

2. He requested that the Council be informed why the WFTU representatives were unable to attend the Council's discussions.

3. The PRESIDENT said that the Polish representative's request would be complied with.

**Commission on the Status of Women (*continued*): (a) Report of the Commission on the Status of Women (sixth session) (E/2208, E/2208/Add.1, E/L.322, E/L.323, E/L.324, E/L.325, E/L.326, E/L.327 (*continued*))**

[Agenda item 17 (a)]

4. Mr. VAVRICKA (Czechoslovakia) did not intend to intervene again in the general discussion on the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/2208). However, he wished to reply to certain allegations made against his country at the preceding meeting by the representative of the United States of America.

5. In order to refute the facts cited by the Czechoslovak delegation, the United States representative had, in his reply, made unfounded allegations which he had tried to render plausible by referring to a journey which he had made in Czechoslovakia before the Second World War. When a speaker resorted to such methods, his imagination was limited by only two factors: his own sense of responsibility and the critical faculties of his audience.

6. The Czechoslovak delegation could not allow the United States representative to use a railway journey through pre-war Czechoslovakia as a basis for judgment on the status and working conditions of peasant women in the People's Democracy of Czechoslovakia. In order to illustrate the progress made by Czechoslovakia in agriculture, he quoted figures showing that the number of tractors per hectare of arable land had risen from 1 per 1,540 hectares in 1930 to 1 per 188 in 1950, and the increase had been still further marked in 1951. He felt that his figures for the mechanization of agriculture were sufficient to show the United States representative's statements on the status of peasant women in Czechoslovakia at their true value.

7. He added that the United States representative's speech had perhaps been still more remarkable for all that it had not said. At the previous meeting, the Czechoslovak delegation had quoted only a single paragraph from the report published by the Civil Rights Congress to show the real reasons why the United States delegation had opposed the clause against discrimination. He wished to repeat that the United States Government opposed that clause because it subjected all Negroes, both men and women, to inhuman and discriminatory treatment in violation of the sacred principles of the United Nations Charter. Since the United States representative had alleged that in his country men and women had equal rights, he would like to ask whether such equality existed between white men and black men and white women and black women. He recalled, among other examples, that only ten of the forty-eight states prohibited the segregation of Negro children in the public schools, that such segregation was given legal sanction in twenty-one states, that the law authorized the separation of white and coloured people in trams and buses and in recreation areas in thirty states, and that in twenty-four states the law prohibited mixed marriages. He added that in 1947, only 1.2 per cent of the Negro population was in a position to exercise its right to vote in the United States of America. Such was the so-called equality of rights which Negroes enjoyed in the United States of America, and it should be realized that that was what lay behind the principle which the United States had advocated and unfortunately succeeded in imposing at the sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, when it had contrived to have the clause against discrimination in all its forms rejected.<sup>1</sup>

8. The United States representative's statement could not change those facts nor could it change the situation which really existed in the countries that were on the side of peace.

9. Mr. KAYSER (France), analysing the report of the Commission on the Status of Women, said that the draft resolutions submitted to the Economic and Social Council by the Commission had been the subject of careful study. The fact that the Commission was proceeding to technical studies or studies of the application of legal principles was a sign that its methods of work had improved and a proof that it was complying scrupulously with its terms of reference. The important and useful studies which the Secretariat had carried out for the Commission should be transmitted to the Council. They would be of the greatest value to the Council, particularly those relating to the nationality of married women and the status of women in private law.

10. In conclusion, he said he was happy to note that the work of the Commission on the Status of Women was advancing successfully.

11. Mr. STERNER (Sweden) thought that certain changes should be made in the draft resolutions put forward for adoption by the Council (E/2208, annex). He agreed with the Egyptian representative who, at the 575th meeting, had drawn the Council's attention to the points of contact between the work of the Commission on Human Rights and that of the Commission on the Status of Women. Thus, draft resolution B, on the

political rights of women, was quite as much within the sphere of the Commission on Human Rights as within that of the Commission on the Status of Women. While it was right to want to guarantee women the enjoyment of political rights, it should not be forgotten that all men were not yet in a position to exercise them. In his opinion, it would therefore have been preferable to propose to the Council a declaration on the need to abolish discrimination—on grounds of sex, race or any other distinction—in the field of political rights and in the matter of access to the professions.

12. He wondered, in that connexion, whether there was any real need to provide for a special convention on the political rights of women. In his view, it would be quite sufficient if an operative paragraph were added after the preamble of draft resolution B, instructing the Commission on Human Rights to include articles in the covenant providing for the abolition of any possible discrimination against women in the exercise of their political rights.

13. With regard to draft resolution E (equal pay for equal work), he reminded members that the Council had already adopted similar resolutions so that the new one might simply be a duplication. It was surely unnecessary periodically to reconsider and adopt practically identical resolutions on the subject.

14. Turning finally to draft resolution D (vocational guidance and vocational and technical education of women), he did not think it was advisable to recommend governments to guarantee women the right to work on an equal footing with men, and to guarantee girls and women access to all forms of training and apprenticeship. He fully appreciated the motives of the Commission on the Status of Women, but he thought it was difficult to use the word "guarantee" in that connexion. Governments had not the constitutional power to give such a guarantee. It would be better to recommend governments to help women to exercise their right to work on an equal footing with men, and to help girls and women to have access to training and apprenticeship. In connexion with draft resolution D, he did not think there was any need to request the International Labour Office to collect information as to the extent to which girls and women were excluded from apprenticeship to certain trades. Obviously ILO had that information already, since it had been collecting it for some time past.

15. Mr. MENDEZ (Philippines) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolutions before the Council. He felt, however, that the Commission on the Status of Women might have placed more emphasis in its report on the rights of married women. The laws of the Philippines were very liberal in their provisions on marriage. In the Philippines there was nothing to prevent a married woman from following the domicile of her husband, should he happen to be a foreigner. Women had the same rights as men: the right to vote and be elected, the right to hold administrative office and to become a minister. Married women were entitled to go to law and to be parties to contracts and their property was protected in marriage. His delegation accordingly attached a great deal of importance to the question of the rights of married women and he

<sup>1</sup> See document E/CN.6/SR.107.

could have wished that the report had dealt with it in greater detail.

16. Mr. DAWSON (International Labour Organisation) emphasized that the International Labour Organisation was always very pleased to furnish the United Nations with any information it might need. The International Labour Office already had a considerable amount of documentation on vocational guidance and vocational and technical education for women, and its annual report always contained an important chapter on the subject. The United Nations could draw freely on all that information.

17. Should the United Nations require further information, ILO had staff available to conduct investigations or draft supplementary reports, on the instructions of the Governing Body. The International Labour Organisation could undertake investigations at the request of the United Nations and would always be very glad to do so. However, it would be more economical if ILO were first to make available to the United Nations the information it already possessed.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that he would put to the vote in turn the various draft resolutions submitted by the Commission on the Status of Women (E/2208, annex).

19. Mr. ARKADYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought it would be better to vote first on draft resolutions B to H, so that the Council could take its decision on the report itself (draft resolution A) in the light of the decisions taken on the other draft resolutions.

20. The CHAIRMAN agreed to that suggestion and proposed that draft resolutions B and C should also be left aside for the time being, since the amendments to be submitted had not yet been distributed.

*Draft resolution D (E/2208, annex)*

21. Lord SELKIRK (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was in favour of the general principles set forth in draft resolution D, but that he was not entirely satisfied with the terminology used or with the drafting of the text as a whole.

22. For example, in the sixth paragraph it seemed to be taken for granted that girls and women were sometimes excluded from apprenticeship to certain trades by trade unions, by employers or by legal restriction. In his opinion, it would be better for the Council to request the International Labour Office to collect information on the extent to which girls and women had access to apprenticeship to the various trades.

23. Turning to recommendation 1 in the operative part, in which governments were recommended to guarantee women the right to work on an equal footing with men, he said that his delegation could not accept that wording; for example, it believed that, in certain cases, women and young persons should have better working conditions than men.

24. In addition, his delegation supported the comment made by the Swedish representative with regard to the use of the word "guarantee".

25. Since they dealt purely with questions of drafting, he did not think it would be necessary for him to submit his observations as a formal proposal.

26. Mr. MENDEZ (Philippines) wondered what the United Kingdom representative meant by "conditions" and asked whether he was referring to material conditions of work or to conditions of remuneration.

27. Lord SELKIRK (United Kingdom) admitted that the word was not absolutely clear. He was only referring to conditions under which work was done.

28. Mr. STERNER (Sweden) was under the impression that it was a question of preventing all discrimination between men and women in regard to the right to work. His delegation had never thought that the paragraph covered conditions of remuneration, since that question was dealt with in draft resolution E.

29. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said that his delegation was prepared to vote for draft resolution D, but recognized the force of the comments made regarding its drafting. In particular, he thought that the Council should address an "invitation" and not a "request" to the International Labour Office.

30. With regard to the remainder of the paragraph, it seemed to him that the Commission would obtain more useful information if the paragraph was left in its existing form than if it was modified as the United Kingdom representative had suggested.

31. His delegation shared the Swedish delegation's misgivings in regard to the word "guarantee". In its strict sense, it implied the existence of a type of economy only possible in totalitarian countries. He would prefer to say "ensure women the right to work". That formula would avoid the difficulty involved in the word "guarantee", the implications of which the United States delegation was unable to accept.

32. Lord SELKIRK (United Kingdom) proposed that the words "To guarantee women the right to work" should be replaced by the words "To seek to ensure women the right to work".

33. Mr. STERNER (Sweden) proposed that recommendation 1 should be drafted as follows: "(1). To recognize the right of women to work on an equal footing with men".

34. He thought that recommendations 2 and 4 should be deleted, since they duplicated recommendation 1.

35. Mr. BIRECKI (Poland) said that the Council's work had reached the stage of attempting to deprive the draft resolution of all significance by means of drafting changes. The elimination of one paragraph after another would finally result in the elimination of the resolution itself.

36. If the General Assembly, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Council itself had taken up the question on a number of occasions, it was because discrimination in fact existed in certain countries. The United States representative had challenged that assertion at the previous meeting. The representative of Poland had, however, in his possession the original documents on which his criticism of the difference in treatment between men and women in the United States of America had been based and would place them at the disposal of the United States representative.

37. Emphasizing the importance of the word "guarantee", which was the word used in the draft resolution submitted by the Commission on the Status of Women,

he said that the Council was not entitled to modify the idea expressed in that text.

38. Mr. ARKADYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) had been surprised to hear the United Kingdom representative put forward a proposal, at the beginning of the meeting, which went even further than that of the Commission on the Status of Women and to hear him call for better conditions for women than for men. He had, however, later discovered that that attitude was confined to words and that the United Kingdom representative even fought shy of the word "guarantee", which was the only appropriate word and had been used advisedly by the Commission, since in countries like the United States of America women did in fact suffer from the absence of guarantees.

39. He wondered what the Swedish representative had in mind in proposing that the word "recognize" should be used. It had often been said that those rights were recognized; however, it was not enough to recognize them. It was also necessary to create conditions guaranteeing their enjoyment.

40. The Commission on the Status of Women had felt the need to guarantee those rights and there was no reason for the Council to revise the draft resolution the Commission had submitted.

41. Mr. ISHAQ (Pakistan) supported the draft resolution, but thought that it required some drafting changes.

42. He agreed with the United Kingdom representative that in a free economy women could not be guaranteed the exercise of the right to work on the same footing as men. Like the Swedish representative, he was in favour of substituting the word "recognize" for the word "guarantee", since governments could enact legislation prohibiting all discrimination and providing for sanctions against trade unions and employers.

43. Miss MANAS (Cuba) recalled that her delegation had voted for the draft resolution in the Commission on the Status of Women, in the belief that all the principles it enunciated should be accepted by all countries.

44. Her delegation was prepared to accept the United States amendment to replace the word "guarantee" by the word "ensure" but would prefer to retain recommendations 2 and 4. She pointed out that recommendation 4 in particular did in fact serve a useful purpose; where the opportunities concerned did not exist, they should be created and where they did exist, they should be developed and publicized.

45. Mrs. CISELET (Belgium) said that, as she had indicated at the 575th meeting, some substitute should be found for the word "guarantee"; she thought, however, that the adoption of the Swedish proposal would unduly restrict the scope of the resolution.

46. She thought that the word "ensure" was the best, and accepted the United States representative's amendment.

47. The CHAIRMAN asked representatives who had proposed verbal amendments during the meeting to submit them in writing so that the Council would be better able to study them. When the texts had been sub-

mitted, the Council would be able to vote on the amendments and on the draft resolution as a whole.

#### *Draft resolution (E/2208, annex)*

48. AZMI Bey (Egypt) introduced his delegation's amendment (E/L.324) to the last paragraph of draft resolution E and explained that there was no longer any reason to include that paragraph since the Commission on Human Rights had already adopted an article for inclusion in the covenant on economic, social and cultural rights, laying down the principle of equal remuneration for equal work for men and women workers.

49. The text of that article could be found in document E/CN.4/666/Add.2, dated 8 May 1952. He added that the terms used in that article had been approved by the International Labour Organisation.

50. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) supported that amendment, for the reasons given by the Egyptian representative.

51. Miss MANAS (Cuba) pointed out that the Commission on Human Rights had only reached the first reading of the draft covenant. The text of the article on equal pay as it stood was perfectly satisfactory to the Commission on the Status of Women, but there was nothing to prevent the Commission on Human Rights from rejecting it later, or at least amending it. In those circumstances, her delegation felt that the Council should maintain at least the spirit, if not the letter, of the last paragraph of draft resolution E. In order to take into account the fully justified remarks made by the Egyptian representative, she proposed that the paragraph should be amended to read:

*"Notes with satisfaction that the Commission on Human Rights has decided to include an article providing for the principle of equal remuneration for equal work for men and women workers in the covenant on economic, social and cultural rights."*

52. Mr. TSAO (China) remarked that the Council had not yet considered the report of the Commission on Human Rights. He wondered whether it would be in order for the Council to take note of a decision of which it had not yet been officially informed.

53. He would not insist on that procedural point if the other members of the Council did not share his doubts.

54. AZMI Bey (Egypt) accepted the Cuban delegation's proposal and accordingly withdrew his amendment (E/L. 324).

55. Mr. STERNER (Sweden) and Lord SELKIRK (United Kingdom) reminded members that the Council had already adopted a resolution at its previous session on equal pay for equal work (385 H (XIII)). They wondered whether there would be any point in adopting draft resolution E, which was practically identical in substance, and feared that an accumulation of resolutions on the same subject would only serve to weaken the Council's recommendations.

56. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) admitted that the draft resolution could be improved and that parts of it were unnecessary or duplicated texts already adopted, but he felt that it did contain some new and interesting points which should be re-

tained. He would not oppose the deletion of the first two paragraphs, but would vote in favour of the rest of the text with the Cuban amendment.

57. At the request of Mr. STERNER (Sweden), the CHAIRMAN put draft resolution E to the vote paragraph by paragraph.

*The first paragraph was adopted by 12 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.*

*The second paragraph was adopted by 10 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.*

*The third paragraph was adopted by 11 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.*

*The fourth paragraph was adopted by 10 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.*

*The fifth paragraph was adopted by 10 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.*

*The sixth paragraph, as amended by the Cuban delegation, was adopted by 13 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.*

*The draft resolution as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 11 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.*

58. Mr. ARKADYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) explained that his delegation had abstained throughout the voting because it considered that the convention adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1951 and the recommendation on equal remuneration for equal work for men and women workers which completed it were far from adequate and could not possibly ensure the effective application

of the principle. His delegation considered that the problem demanded far more energetic measures than those provided for in the ILO convention.

*Draft resolution F (E/2208, annex)*

59. Lord SELKIRK (United Kingdom) understood that the International Labour Organisation was preparing a study on part-time work which would not however be ready before the seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Consequently, he proposed that the beginning of draft resolution F should be amended to read:

*"Requests the Secretary General to prepare for the Commission on the Status of Women a report . . ."*

60. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) feared that by deleting all reference to the Commission's seventh session, as Lord Selkirk had proposed, the Council might encourage delays which would influence the work of the Commission itself. He would therefore be obliged to vote against the amendment.

61. The PRESIDENT put the United Kingdom amendment to the vote.

*The amendment was not adopted, 5 votes being cast in favour and 5 against, with 6 abstentions.*

62. The PRESIDENT put draft resolution F (E/2208, annex) to the vote.

*Draft resolution F was adopted by 14 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions.*

The meeting rose at 1 p. m.