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President: Mr. Mohammad MIR KHAN (Pakistan),

Present:

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, Indonesia, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following countries: Albania, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Philippines, Romania, Venezuela.

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, World Health Organization.

AGENDA ITEM 15

Non-governmental organizations (E/2955, E/L.748) (*concluded*)

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ON APPLICATIONS AND RE-APPLICATIONS FOR CONSULTATIVE STATUS (E/2955) (*concluded*)

1. Mr. PENTEADO (Brazil), speaking as Chairman of the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, said in reply to a point raised by the Soviet representative at the previous meeting that no secrecy or mystery surrounded the work of that Committee. If it had met in closed session, that was in full accordance with a decision of the Council and there was nothing irregular about it.

2. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said his delegation supported all the recommendations made in the report of the Council NGO Committee (E/2955). Those recommendations had been reached only after very careful consideration and had been

adopted by a vote of 5 in favour, 1 against, and 1 abstention. To reject them would be a very serious matter and would be tantamount to expressing a vote of no confidence in the Committee.

3. In adding a few words to the cogent and lucid statement made by the United Kingdom representative at the previous meeting, he would stress that the three organizations favoured by the USSR, namely the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, and the International Organization of Journalists, had failed to satisfy essential conditions for the admission of non-governmental organizations to consultative status with the Council, as set forth in Council resolution 288 B (X), parts I, III and IV. Thus it was to be noted that those organizations had adopted a position on the recent events in Hungary which was contrary to the position taken by the General Assembly.

4. In spite of the claims made by the USSR representative that the World Federation of Democratic Youth had no political leanings and sought only world peace and co-operation, the fact remained that it was utterly political and one-sided in character. As pointed out recently in a leading Yugoslav publication, it was a divisive force rather than an organization fostering co-operation among the young people of the world.

5. The International Organization of Journalists had failed to show any sympathy for the journalists in Hungary in their struggle for greater freedom; indeed, the organization had not even objected to the suppression of its own Hungarian branch following the events of November 1956. At an earlier stage the International Organization of Journalists had expelled the Yugoslav association of journalists when they supported Marshal Tito in his struggle to assert his country's independence. In other words, as soon as any divergence from the party political line was observed, the persons responsible for the divergence were expelled from the organization. He asked whether that was the attitude of a body likely to assist the Council in its efforts to promote freedom of information.

6. Similarly, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers had defended the events in Hungary, while certain lawyers from Belgium and France had been expelled because they had supported the line taken by the United Nations with regard to those events. The Association was monolithic in character and one-sided in its political orientation. It was true, as the USSR representative had pointed out, that it had members in many countries, but many of them, who had joined the organization with high hopes, had withdrawn from it in protest against its policy.

7. The USSR representative had also compared what he termed the "mass democratic organizations", which ought to have category B status, with others which according to him were not fit to enter into consultative status with the Council. He had made disparaging remarks about the American Foreign Insurance Asso-

ciation, the International Confederation of Midwives and other organizations in the economic and social fields. Considering the functions and nature of the Council, those were the very types of organizations which could be of considerable assistance to it in their various fields of activity, rather than the political organizations sponsored by the USSR.

8. The United States delegation was therefore unable to support the applications of the three organizations in question, but it would support the others as they could engage in useful co-operation on technical matters with the United Nations.

9. Mr. MACHOWSKI (Poland) said that representatives had been active in the three organizations to which the representative of the Council NGO Committee had objected. His delegation could not agree with the assertion made by the Chairman of the Council NGO Committee that the Committee had conducted its business in a proper manner. In fact, its meetings had been closed and representatives of the organizations concerned had been prevented from supporting their applications with oral statements. There was nothing in the Committee's rules of procedure to justify the holding of closed meetings. It was to be hoped that in the future its meetings would be open to the public.

10. It was a fundamental principle that no political considerations should bar organizations from being admitted to consultative status with the Council. His delegation could not agree with the decision recommended in paragraph 1 of draft resolution A submitted by the Committee (E/2955, para. 2). The World Federation of Democratic Youth had been in category B between 1947 and 1950, when it had been unjustly transferred to the Register. Its applications for re-admission to consultative status in category B had subsequently been rejected. The Federation had taken part in the seventh, eighth and ninth sessions of the Council and had expressed a wish to co-operate with the United Nations and its subsidiary organizations. Furthermore, the statutes of the Federation advocated the closest possible contact with the United Nations, and particularly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on matters of interest to young people. It was unfair that many youth organizations of lesser importance had been admitted to consultative status with the Council whereas the World Federation of Democratic Youth, with its enormous following, had been excluded. He hoped that the rights of the Federation would be restored as soon as possible.

11. The International Organization of Journalists had been founded in London in 1941, and in October 1942 it had laid down a line of policy which was in complete conformity with the United Nations Charter. Its membership was constantly growing and it now had 62,000 affiliates in fifty-three different countries. Like the World Federation of Democratic Youth, it had been deprived unjustly of consultative status in 1950 in spite of the useful contribution which it could make to the Council's work.

12. The International Association of Democratic Lawyers had been founded in 1946 in Paris on the initiative of certain French lawyers who had been active in the French Resistance during the Second World War. It too had been unjustly deprived of consultative status in 1950. Its membership was drawn from forty-seven different countries and thirty-two national groups. It

worked for peace and co-operation among nations and the restoration of democratic rights and liberties to those who had been deprived of them. It was fully qualified to assist the Council and should be restored to its rightful place in category B. It was surely an act of discrimination on the part of the Council NGO Committee to reject the application of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and, in the same resolution, to grant consultative status to the International Commission of Jurists, which in fact was a much smaller body. While his delegation was not hostile to the International Commission of Jurists, it nevertheless felt that the application of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers was equally valid.

13. His delegation supported the USSR amendments (E/L.748), to draft resolution A submitted by the NGO Committee (E/2955, para. 2).

14. Mr. DRAGO (Argentina) said that his delegation would support the recommendations made in the report of the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/2955). He particularly welcomed the recommendation that consultative status should be granted to the International Commission of Jurists, which was a highly reputable body capable of offering valuable assistance to the Commission on Human Rights.

15. Mr. EPINAT (France) said that, in examining applications for consultative status, the French Government weighed all the relevant considerations and sought to determine whether the activities of the applicant organization were fully consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations set forth in the Charter. The World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and the International Organization of Journalists had aroused great hopes at the time of their formation, but had subsequently assumed a monolithic character which seemed seriously at variance with their original objectives. Consequently, and in view of their conduct during recent events, the French Government could not at present regard them as properly qualified for the status they requested.

16. Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the United States representative had manifestly failed to make out a case against the three organizations which he had so strongly denounced. He had been equally antagonistic to those organizations long before the Hungarian incident, in fact ever since 1951, when they had spoken out against the United States aggression in Korea.

17. The United States representative had wrongly accused him of making disparaging remarks about the International Confederation of Midwives and other similar organizations. Such bodies all had their importance, but it was preposterous to contend that they were entitled to greater privileges than the vast democratic organizations which were again being denied their rights. Furthermore, it was wholly improper to deny consultative status to the International Association of Democratic Lawyers while granting it to the International Commission of Jurists. The latter was a small and not very authoritative body, which could not be compared with an association enjoying world-wide renown.

18. The United States representative had not adduced a single material fact which could justify the recommendations of the Council Committee on Non-

Governmental Organizations. Consequently, the Council, which has already wasted sufficient time over the years in perpetuating an irregular situation, would add little to the prestige of the United Nations by rejecting the three applications again.

19. Mr. EFFENDI NUR (Indonesia) said that the Indonesian delegation, after studying the record of the discussion in the Council NGO Committee and after listening to the arguments in the Council itself, had had difficulty in ascertaining whether considerations of a purely technical nature or other considerations had been decisive in reaching a conclusion in the matter. His delegation believed that the debate had not led to a really constructive solution of the problem. He would therefore abstain from voting on draft resolution A (E/2955, para. 2) and on the USSR amendments (E/L.748).

20. Miss RADIC (Yugoslavia) said that the Yugoslav delegation would also abstain from voting either on draft resolution (E/2955, para. 2) or on the USSR amendments (E/L.748) and deeply regretted the fact that the Council apparently seemed incapable of finding a reasonable solution to the question.

21. Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation felt bound to make a few additional comments on the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/2955).

22. In paragraph 4 of draft resolution A (E/2955, para. 2), the Committee recommended that the Council should grant category B consultative status to the non-governmental organization known as the International Commission of Jurists.

23. His delegation could not support that recommendation. The International Commission of Jurists was not a very authoritative body, and its activities bore very little relation to the Council's work. Since its establishment in 1952, the Commission had done nothing to indicate that it was an organization that could be of use to the Council.

24. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had acted hastily and without sufficient justification in recommending the granting of category B consultative status to the International Commission of Jurists. His delegation formally proposed, therefore, that consideration of the Commission's application should be deferred until the following year.

25. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said that the representative of the Soviet Union had failed to give reasons for his proposal that consideration of the Council Committee's recommendation concerning the International Commission of Jurists should be deferred until the following year. It was the United States delegation's view that the Council should take action on the recommendation immediately.

26. It was true that the United States had opposed the requests of the three organizations in question even before the events in Hungary; those events had merely confirmed the fact that the organizations had maintained their negative attitude with respect to certain actions taken by the United Nations such as the collective security measures adopted by the United Nations to meet Communist aggression in Korea.

27. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the USSR amendments (E/L.748) to draft resolution A submitted by the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/2955, para. 2).

The amendments were rejected by 11 votes to 2, with 5 abstentions.

28. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the proposal that consideration of the recommendation by the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations concerning the International Commission of Jurists should be deferred until the following year.

The proposal was rejected by 11 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

29. The PRESIDENT asked the Council to note that the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had amended draft resolution A (E/2955, para. 2) to include the Comité d'études économiques de l'industrie du gaz in paragraph 5 instead of paragraph 3.

Draft resolution A, as amended, was adopted by 12 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions.

Draft resolution B was adopted by 16 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

AGENDA ITEM 9

Report of the Population Commission (ninth session) (E/2957, E/2971)

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE (E/2971)

30. The PRESIDENT put to the vote draft resolutions A, B and C submitted by the Social Committee (E/2971, para.3).

Draft resolutions A, B and C were adopted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Freedom of information (E/2978)

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE (E/2978)

31. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the draft resolution submitted by the Social Committee (E/2978, para. 5).

The draft resolution was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

32. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) said that his delegation's abstention had been fully explained in the Social Committee.

Date of meeting of the Technical Assistance Committee

33. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) observed that the Council would consider its provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session at a subsequent meeting on the basis of a document to be submitted by the Secretariat. However, it was difficult for the Secretariat to prepare a work schedule unless it knew whether the Co-ordination Committee and the Technical Assistance Committee would meet before the opening of the Council's session. In view of its heavy agenda, the Technical Assistance Committee should meet earlier in order to complete its work.

34. Mr. VAKIL (Secretary of the Council) said that the Technical Assistance Committee could meet on 25 June without entailing substantial additional expenditures provided that it did not hold simultaneous meetings with the Co-ordination Committee, which was also scheduled to hold its meetings at that time. If the two Committees met alternately, the same Secre-

tariat staff could be used for both. If not, the servicing of the meetings would entail additional funds. Moreover, the scheduling of meetings would present a problem since the General Conference of the ILO would still be in session.

35. He drew the Council's attention to the fact that the Secretariat would not be in a position to distribute the documents for the Technical Assistance Committee at an earlier date in view of the large volume of documentation involved and the late date at which the eleventh session of the General Assembly had been concluded. However, the Secretariat would endeavour to make the report of the Technical Assistance Board

to the Technical Assistance Committee available in time.

36. Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that the Council should not take a decision in the matter at the current meeting. He would have to bring the question to the attention of the head of the USSR delegation to the twenty-fourth session of the Council.

37. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Secretariat should prepare a schedule of meetings for consideration by the Council at a subsequent meeting.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.