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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: Bulgaria, Chile, Hungary, India, Japan, Philippines, Romania, Saudi Arabia.

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

AGENDA ITEM 1

Election of the President and Vice-Presidents for 1957

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

1. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs), Acting President, declared the twenty-third session of the Council open.
2. He called for nominations for the post of President.
3. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom), supported by Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic), Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (France), Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. ASMAUN (Indonesia), nominated Mr. Mir Khan (Pakistan).

Mr. Mir Khan (Pakistan) was elected President by acclamation.

Mr. Mir Khan (Pakistan) took the Chair.

4. The PRESIDENT thanked the Council for electing him.

5. He welcomed the representatives of the Council's new members, Finland, Mexico and Poland, and those of the re-elected members, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and Pakistan.

6. The Council was entering upon its twenty-third session with the experience of eleven years, in the course of which it had become the major policy-making body of the United Nations in economic and social matters. Although its agenda for the session was somewhat lighter than usual, the Council had a number of important items to consider. The problem of the economic development of the under-developed countries had always been one of the main objects of its attention; at the current session it was to confine its efforts to three aspects of that problem: industrialization, land reform and co-operatives. It would have before it a progress report from the Secretary-General on the implementation of the work programme on industrialization; the various studies that were being carried out by the Secretariat would no doubt be of great help to Governments in determining their industrialization policies and appraising their needs for technical assistance in industrialization. There would be a second report on progress in land reform and a report prepared by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation on the subject of co-operatives. The former showed that although improvements in agrarian structure had not been uniform in all areas, there was, nevertheless, an increasing awareness of the problems involved, and he hoped that positive solutions would soon emerge.

7. In addition, apart from the annual reports of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the reports of the Transport and Communications and the Population Commissions, there were several important items affecting human rights. They were often the most controversial because they aroused deep feelings; he hoped, however, that members would find a practical way of approaching them.

ELECTION OF THE FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

8. Mr. LUNS (Netherlands), supported by Mr. LOUTFI (Egypt), Mrs. LEIVO-LARSSON (Finland), Mr. BAKER (United States of America) and Mr. MACKAY (Canada), nominated Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic).

Miss Bernardino (Dominican Republic) was elected First Vice-President by acclamation.

9. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) thanked the Council for the honour it had done her Government, her country and herself in electing her First Vice-President.

ELECTION OF THE SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

10. Mr. FARUQUI (Pakistan), supported by Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (France), Mr. BRILEJ (Yugoslavia) and Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), nominated Mr. MICHALOWSKI (Poland).

Mr. Michalowski (Poland) was elected Second Vice-President by acclamation.

11. Mr. MICHALOWSKI (Poland) thanked the Council for electing him.

Question of the representation of China

12. Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to the abnormality of a situation in which one of the Great Powers—the People's Republic of China—was not represented either in the United Nations as a whole, or in the Economic and Social Council in particular. China's seat in the Council was illegally occupied by a person who represented no one but himself and the Kuomintang group, which had been expelled from the country by the Chinese people. The absence from the Council of legitimate representatives of the People's Republic of China was a serious obstacle to the accomplishment of the Council's work. Only a representative appointed by the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China could be the legitimate representative of China.

13. Mr. CHENG (China) took exception to the remarks made by the representative of the Soviet Union: China had been elected to membership of the Council by the General Assembly, and the Government he represented was the only legally constituted Government of China; the Soviet representative's contention was therefore out of order.

14. Mr. ASMAUN (Indonesia) said that his Government had recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China and therefore considered that China's seat in the Council and in all other organs of the United Nations legally belonged to that Government's representatives.

15. Mr. MICHALOWSKI (Poland) regretted that the Council was opening its twenty-third session in the absence of a representative of the People's Republic of China, whose presence would undoubtedly have contributed greatly to the success of its work. He hoped that that abnormal situation would soon be rectified.

16. Mr. BRILEJ (Yugoslavia) said that his Government, too, considered the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China the legitimate Government of the Chinese people. The participation of its representatives in the activities of the United Nations and its organs, and in particular in those of the Economic and Social Council, would be of great value and would contribute to the maintenance of world peace.

17. Mr. BAKER (United States of America) said that his Government's views on the representation of China were well known: it was opposed to the seating of representatives of the Chinese Communist régime—which departed so drastically from normally accepted standards of international conduct—as contrary to the interests of the United Nations.

18. The PRESIDENT said that the statements made by the representatives of the Soviet Union, China, Indonesia, Poland, Yugoslavia and the United States would be included in the record.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Adoption of the sessional agenda (E/2946, E/L.744 and Corr.1, E/L.745)

19. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the provisional agenda (E/2946) and to the proposals made by the Secretary-General (E/L.744, and Corr.1) for the disposal of items arising out of the eleventh session of the General Assembly.

The Council decided to add to the agenda of its twenty-third session a supplementary item entitled: "International commodity problems: General Assembly resolution 1029 (XI)".

The Council decided to add to the agenda of its twenty-third session a supplementary item entitled: "Question of the membership of the Technical Assistance Committee".

The Council decided to postpone item 6 (Financing of economic development) until the twenty-fourth session.

The Council decided to consider General Assembly resolution 1033 A (XI), on industrialization of under-developed countries, in connexion with item 5 (Economic development of under-developed countries).

The agenda, as amended in accordance with the Secretary-General's proposals, was adopted.

ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS AT THE SESSION (E/L.745)

20. Mr. ABDEL-GHANI (Egypt), commenting on the proposed order of items (E/L.745, para. 6), suggested that item 10 (Recommendation addressed to the Council by the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on a Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave-Trade and Institutions and Practices similar to Slavery) should be discussed by the Social Committee. The title of that item was somewhat misleading, since the Council was required to consider only the question of the minimum age for marriage.

21. Miss BERNARDINO (Dominican Republic) said that the Commission on the Status of Women had asked the Council for authorization to undertake the detailed study to which the recommendation of the Slavery Conference (E/2934) referred. Consequently, item 10 might be more speedily disposed of in plenary session.

22. Mr. ABDEL-GHANI (Egypt) said that, if the item was to entail only a short procedural discussion, he would not press for its transfer. He would, however, formally propose the transfer to the Social Committee of item 11 (Allegations regarding infringements of trade-union rights), which was not a suitable item for debate in plenary session.

23. Mr. BAKER (United States of America) supported the Egyptian representative's proposal that item 11 should be discussed in the first instance in the Social Committee.

The Egyptian proposal was adopted.

24. Mr. ABDEL-GHANI (Egypt) felt that item 12 (Freedom of information), which it was proposed to discuss in Committee, should preferably be discussed in plenary session, where representatives would be able to review the long history of the subject.

25. Mr. CHENG (China) thought that the question of media of information in under-developed countries, the aspect of the question of freedom of information which the Council was to consider, was too technical for discussion in plenary.

26. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) said that the Social Committee would be best qualified to discuss the rather technical aspect of the subject in the document before the Council. Moreover, a debate on the question in plenary session might lead to needlessly protracted exchanges of views on the whole subject of freedom of information. It would therefore be better to leave the item to the Social Committee, where the debate could more easily be confined to the narrower issue envisaged.

27. Mr. FARUQUI (Pakistan) said that the Social Committee seemed best qualified to discuss the item in

the first instance. The Council would always be able to take the question up subsequently in plenary session.

28. The PRESIDENT stated that, if the members of the Council agreed, the arrangement of business proposed in the Secretary-General's note (E/L.745), as amended by the Egyptian proposal concerning item 11, would be considered approved.

It was so decided.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES

29. The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should agree to establish an Economic and a Social Committee of the whole, as suggested by the Secretary-General (E/L.745, para. 3).

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.