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President: Sir Douglas COPLAND (Australia).

Present:

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Australia, China, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, India, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following Member States: Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Mexico.

Observers from the following non-member States: Bulgaria, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, Switzerland.

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 Civil Aviation Organization, World Health Organization, International Telecommunication Union, World Meteorological Organization, Interim Commission of the International Trade Organization.

Opening of the session

1. The PRESIDENT declared open the twentieth session of the Economic and Social Council.
2. He observed that the occasion was distinguished by the special circumstance that the tenth anniversary of the United Nations had been recently celebrated in San Francisco and that Geneva was about to be the seat of "a meeting at the summit" which might well prove a turning-point in post-war endeavours to build a lasting peace. Never since the war had there been a better opportunity of underlining the truth that the only way to build one world was to recognize and respect differences of race and religion. Men must realize that they must either live together or perish together. The ideal of achieving unity of purpose through diversity of approach was the idea of universality upon which the United Nations was based.
3. The Council had a special responsibility, for it was concerned not only with the work of raising the living standards of at least two-thirds of the human race but also with the more difficult task of promoting respect for human rights. Its objective was the welfare of the whole human race. At that session it had an opportunity of

taking stock and of consolidating afresh a co-ordinated attack on the most urgent problems confronting it. It would be unrealistic to expect swift and simple solutions of the problems that lay before them. In the past, it must be recognized, the atmosphere of suspicion and distrust surrounding their sessions had been a serious handicap. If, as was the hope of all, there was to be an improvement in the international climate, the Council would become the most important agency for international co-operation. It might be said that in the summer of 1955 the world had never had a better opportunity of turning its swords into ploughshares.

4. The Council should make its plans in the hope that it would one day be able to discharge its functions in a better atmosphere than in the past, thereby justifying the courage and imagination shown by the founding fathers at San Francisco when they drafted the Charter. At that session the Council had the opportunity of re-stating its methods and co-ordinating its activities. Success lay along the lines of agreement in substance and, where there was disagreement, acceptance of their differences in the spirit that in the long run diversities of approach would have to be reconciled. To some extent, disappointment and discouragement in such a vast human task, embracing the hopes of people throughout the world, were inevitable. He would conclude by recalling the experience of the early explorers of his own country, whose motto was that there was better country farther on. That was the dictum that the Council should inscribe on its banner.

5. Mr. KUMYKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to the abnormal situation caused by the fact that there was no representative present of the People's Republic of China, the lawful government of that great country. Such an anomaly could only be detrimental to the Council's work. It was quite clear that only a representative appointed by the Government of the People's Republic of China could properly represent China in the Council, as in other United Nations organs. The Soviet Union was not alone in taking that view: he would recall the joint declaration made on 2 June in Belgrade by the Governments of the Soviet Union and the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia in which the Governments of the two countries spoke of the need to exert further efforts to enhance the role and strengthen the authority of the United Nations, a purpose which could be especially served by granting a representative of the People's Republic of China his rightful place in the United Nations. Again, in a joint statement which the Prime Ministers of the Soviet Union and of the Republic of India had issued on 22 June 1955, special emphasis had been laid on the necessity of granting to the People's Republic of China its rightful place in the

United Nations. The continued absence of the representative of a country the inhabitants of which numbered a quarter of the population of the world was a serious obstacle to the progress of the Council, which was faced with serious tasks in developing international co-operation in the economic and social fields.

6. Mr. HSIA (China) regretted that the opening of the session should be clouded by the calling in question by one delegation of the right of another to sit at the Council table. Such an act could only increase international tension. The Government of which he was the representative was the only legal Government of China, recognized by an overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations, and there was no validity in the claim for the People's Republic of China made by the Soviet Union representative.

7. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia), endorsing the Soviet Union representative's remarks, said that the Council needed to devote all its strength to the tasks that faced it in the different parts of the world, and that called for the full co-operation of States. However, it found itself unrepresented by one of the great countries of the world. The People's Republic of China had made immense progress in peaceful reconstruction in the political, economic and social fields, and those achievements, which had won widespread recognition, were exerting an influence not only in the Far East, but throughout the world. He requested that his remarks be inserted in the summary record of that meeting.

8. The PRESIDENT said that as the General Assembly had already taken action in the matter there was, in his view, no question regarding the legality of Chinese representation on the Council, but the statements made by the representatives of the Soviet Union, China and Czechoslovakia, together with his own comments, would be included in the record.

AGENDA ITEM 1

Adoption of the sessional agenda (E/2741, E/2773, E/L.666 and Add.1)

9. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) wished to make two formal proposals on the provisional agenda. First, he would move that a co-ordination committee be set up with the main purpose of dealing with matters of detail that might arise under item 4 (Co-ordination).

10. Secondly, with regard to item 5—international commodity problems—which was divided into three separate sub-items, (a), (b), (c), he would propose deferment of the consideration of sub-items (a) and (b) till some subsequent session. The reason for his proposal was that a Working Party of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) would be held in August in order to discuss commodity problems. That Working Party would transmit its report to Governments for their comments. It was accordingly advisable to defer consideration of sub-items 5 (a) and (b) until the report had been considered. The report of the first session of the Commission on International Commodity Trade, however, would have to receive formal consideration at the present session.

11. The PRESIDENT said that the Council should take a decision on the first United Kingdom proposal to set

up a co-ordination committee in order to consider matters of detail that might be referred to it by the Council.

There being no objections, *the first United Kingdom proposal was adopted.*

12. Mr. TUNCEL (Turkey) pointed out that the United Kingdom proposal touched the heart of a question which had been debated at length at the Council's eighteenth session. The proposal, incidentally, was simply the echo of a proposal, made to the Co-ordination Committee at that same session, that the Council should defer decision on the establishment of the Commission on International Commodity Trade pending the results of discussions between the Contracting Parties to the GATT. As, however, the United Kingdom proposal had been withdrawn on that occasion the Council was now called upon, under its resolution 557 F (XVIII), to consider the status and functions of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for International Commodity Arrangements and of the Commission on International Commodity Trade.

13. The United Kingdom representative, therefore, by the proposal he had just made, was in effect asking the Council to go back on a formal decision taken at its eighteenth session. Furthermore, should the Council agree to defer consideration of the question, it would give the impression that it was not anxious to exercise its rights.

14. The activities of the GATT Working Party had been hampered by the fact that the Council had not already come to a decision on the status and functions of the Interim Committee. The Council must therefore reach a decision on the subject as soon as possible—a decision which would be bound to simplify the work of the Contracting Parties.

15. His delegation accordingly suggested that the United Kingdom delegation should withdraw its proposal, although it might bring it up again before the Economic Committee in the form of a draft resolution when the Committee considered item 5 of the agenda. In that way the Council would be able to indicate its attitude on the question of the part to be played by the Interim Committee.

16. Mr. PICO (Argentina), referring to the discussion at the eighteenth session on the question of setting up the Commission on International Commodity Trade, said that the conditions established at the Commission's first session had undoubtedly facilitated the undertaking of important tasks and the clarification of certain problems. Argentina, which was not a member of GATT, had no direct interest in the matter. His delegation, however, did not want to rush a decision if other countries had not collected all the data required, and he would therefore support the United Kingdom proposal. The Turkish objection seemed to have little force. Adoption of the proposal would in no way entail a resuscitation of the earlier United Kingdom draft resolution, because the Commission had been established and was at work; deferment of consideration of sub-items 5 (a) and (b) would not interfere with the progress or encroach upon the competence of the Commission.

17. Mr. TRUJILLO (Ecuador), without being opposed to the United Kingdom proposal, considered that until

the Secretary-General's statement had been distributed its adoption would be premature. His delegation would therefore support the Turkish proposal.

18. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom), in reply to the PRESIDENT, stressed that he was not proposing indefinite postponement. It was a matter of simple expediency for the Council to postpone its consideration of the subject until delegations had had time to study the GATT Working Party's report.

19. Mr. KUMYKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), supporting the Turkish and Ecuadorian proposals, moved the adoption of the provisional agenda as it stood.

20. Mr. PICO (Argentina) said that the issue would perhaps be simplified if the United Kingdom proposal would specifically defer consideration of the sub-items in question till the Council's twenty-first session.

21. The Argentine suggestion having been accepted by Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom), the PRESIDENT put to the vote the United Kingdom proposal that the Council should defer its consideration of sub-items 5(a) and (b) until its twenty-first session.

The proposal was adopted by 10 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.

22. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the question of Spain becoming a party to the protocols of 1946 and 1948 on narcotic drugs (E/2773).

23. Mr. KUMYKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in view of the fact that his delegation had only just received the document—and then in the English text only—it would be advisable to defer consideration of the question.

It was agreed that the Council would decide at a future meeting whether to include this question as a new item on the agenda of the present session of the Council.

24. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) suggested that the question of membership of the regional economic commissions listed under item 2 of the provisional agenda could not suitably be considered in the context of a broad discussion on the world economic situation. It was an issue which might be more properly discussed under item 4. But whether they were taken by the Economic or Co-ordination Committees or by the Council in plenary session, sub-items 2(c)(ii) and 2(e)(ii) should be discussed separately.

25. Mr. KUMYKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) urged that a decision on the question of new membership of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) should not be separated from consideration of the ECE report. He would prefer the agenda to be left as it stood. If, however, it was desired to set aside the question of membership to ECE, that subject should be linked with consideration of the report.

26. After further discussion in which Mr. BAKER (United States of America), Mr. BORIS (France), Mr. CHENG Paonan (China), Mr. STANOVNIK (Yugoslavia), Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia), Sardar S. SINGH (India) and the PRESIDENT took part, Sir Alec

RANDALL (United Kingdom) said that his proposal had been intended to simplify the discussion and to avoid duplication. In view of the lack of support that it had met with, however, he would withdraw his proposal.

The agenda, as amended, was adopted unanimously.

27. Referring to the arrangement of business (E/L.666 and Add.1), the PRESIDENT said that in view of the absence from Geneva of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the date indicated in document E/L.666 for the discussion on item 11—Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees—consideration of that item should be deferred. He took it that there would be no objection to that step and a new date would be proposed subsequently.

It was so agreed.

28. Mr. BORIS (France) thought it might be found better during the discussion that certain matters relevant to item 2 should be referred to the Co-ordination Committee rather than to the Economic Committee. He asked whether the Council, after adopting the proposals in document E/L.666, could afterwards take a decision in this sense.

29. The PRESIDENT said that in the light of the decision to set up a co-ordination committee to deal with matters of detail, the question of membership of regional economic commissions was certainly a suitable subject to be referred to the committee by the Council.

30. Mr. KUMYKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) moved the adoption of document E/L.666—Arrangement of business at the twentieth session of the Council.

The arrangement of business at the twentieth session of the Council (E/L.666), as amended, was adopted unanimously.

31. Mr. de SEYNES (Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs) felt that he should make some remarks, at the very beginning of the session, on the financial implications of the Council's actions. Admittedly, in view of the impossibility of submitting a summary statement of expenditure involved until all decisions with financial implications had been taken, the Council did not usually take up that question until the end of the session. That practice, however, was not perhaps the one which lent itself best to thorough consideration of the question as a whole.

32. The Council, while having no budgetary powers, did seem to have certain definite obligations under rule 34 of its rules of procedure. After quoting a passage from paragraph 3 of the rule, he added that the problem, in any case, went considerably beyond the scope of purely budgetary considerations. In 1954, the Council had approved a plan submitted by the Secretary-General (E/2598) bearing on the activities of the Secretariat in the economic and social fields, the principles underlying the plan being set out in paragraph 3 of the document, which he proceeded to read.

33. Yet those decisions might well remain a dead letter if the Council did not make it its business to view every measure that it saw fit to adopt in the light of an over-all yearly programme in harmony with the principles he had just quoted.

34. Difficulties might arise, more particularly in connexion with the work programmes drawn up by the commissions or sub-commissions of the Council. On every occasion the Secretariat had made it its duty to recall the aims and priorities adopted by the Council and the impact of those decisions on its structure and resources, and had been at pains to indicate those activities which could be developed and those it seemed desirable to restrict. The reorganization scheme, he was glad to say, had, generally speaking, won a large measure of approval. As was quite natural, however, bodies not directly associated with the 1954 decisions sometimes wished to travel faster and go further than the Council itself. That was why he felt it advisable for certain recommendations in the reports of the commissions to be brought to the Council's notice before it considered the reports so that it could pay special attention to cases where the programme advocated would require additional resources or tend to defeat the measures of internal reorganization which had been taken.

35. The importance of such a study from the point of view of staff efficiency and morale could hardly be overstressed. As a result of the previous year's discussions, important administrative reforms, involving severe staff cuts in some cases, had had to be undertaken in order to make the Department of Economic and Social Affairs an effective instrument for the execution of the policy of priorities laid down by the Council. But if the Council, in adopting its programme of work for 1955, were to show that it attached only passing or minor importance to the implementation of that policy of priorities, and to the administrative and financial arrangements which it implied, achievement of the desired ends might be seriously jeopardized.

36. To enable it to draw up its programme of work with such considerations in mind, the Council had before it a report (E/2774), to be supported later by a statement of expenditure envisaged under the heading of Department of Economic and Social Affairs in the budget estimates for 1956. In addition, it already had before it estimates of the financial implications of the proposals made in the reports of the Commission on International Commodity Trade, the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

37. It would be recalled that in 1954 the Secretary-General had proposed, in document E/2598, that publication of the *Biennial Report on Family and Child Welfare* should be suspended. It would, however, be seen from the report of the Social Commission (E/2758) that project No. 24 of its programme of work involved the preparation for its eleventh session of a report by the Secretariat bearing a close resemblance to the above-mentioned document. Such a task could not be carried out for the Commission's eleventh session with existing staff resources. In any case, no new factor had arisen to invalidate the view expressed the previous year by the Secretary-General, and accepted by the Council, that the resources of the Bureau of Social Affairs could be more usefully devoted to other kinds of work.

38. Similarly, the Secretary-General had suggested in 1954 that the number of issues of the *Bulletin on Narcotics*,

which was then appearing once a quarter, might be cut down. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs had been disturbed by that measure and had recommended the continuance of quarterly publication. It seemed, however, that the arguments advanced by the Secretary-General last year held good in that case also and that the Commission was unduly alarmed. A half-yearly *Bulletin* would appear to be sufficient, on the understanding that a third issue could be published when necessary.

39. The report of the Commission on Human Rights raised more difficult problems, and the Council would no doubt wish to examine them in the light of the Secretary-General's statement last year (E/2598).

40. An initial difficulty arose in connexion with the resolution adopted by the Commission concerning the *Yearbook on Human Rights*, which specified that the yearbooks for 1955 and 1956 should include supplementary sections. In the Commission's view the present staff should be able to cope with that additional work, and the resolution accordingly invited Governments to submit summaries, references and extracts in future, instead of full texts.

41. The Commission's estimates on that point were over-optimistic; despite the precautions taken, the implementation of the resolution would call for a larger staff than was provided for within the limits of the cuts at present being made. The documentation transmitted by Governments was often extensive, and the Secretariat would expose itself to criticism if it published all the information received from Governments without analysis and pre-arrangement, since the publication would then become unwieldy and its value and usefulness to Governments and to the public would be greatly reduced.

42. The same resolution provided that the *Yearbook* would include a bibliographical index of works and studies relating to human rights. The financial implications set out in annex II to the Commission's report showed that the extra cost would exceed 3,000 dollars per year. The Secretary-General had strongly urged the Commission to spare him that work and to allow him to take the necessary steps to have the bibliographical material made available to those concerned at the United Nations Headquarters Library. That was the solution which he himself recommended to the Council.

43. As to resolution B, which appeared in annex I to the report of the Commission on Human Rights, the Council was aware that the study on discrimination in education prepared by the rapporteur, Mr. Ammoun, with the help of the Secretariat had not yet been completed. It was to be hoped that the members of the Sub-Commission would have this report before them when they met at the beginning of 1956. The Sub-Commission wished then to undertake two further studies, and the Commission on Human Rights had intimated its views in a draft resolution asking the Council to approve the Sub-Commission's decision. Should that prove impossible, the Commission recommended that one further study should be undertaken in 1956 in any case and another in 1957. The studies requested by the Sub-Commission involved considerable research, comprising as they did the collection of data on a new aspect of the

problem of discrimination throughout the world, the examination and classification of those data, the communication of the documentation to Member and non-member States of the United Nations, waiting for and studying replies from governments, assisting the rapporteur in making a general analysis of the documentation and, lastly, the translation and publication of his report. All those successive stages of the work would require, according to the Secretariat's estimates, about two years for each study. Assuming that the study on discrimination in education was completed by the end of 1955—which was uncertain—it would be wise to arrange for 1956 and 1957 to be allotted to only one of the proposed studies. He hoped that the Council would not ask the Secretariat to undertake a third study before the necessary funds became available, that was to say, probably not before 1958.

44. It was difficult to be specific about the administrative and financial consequences of the adoption of the resolution on international respect for the rights of peoples to self-determination. Moreover, the consequences of the resolution were so far-reaching that the Council would no doubt wish to examine them and express its views on the matter in the light of general considerations before going into their budgetary implications. The Council must expect to find, however, that the resolution could not be implemented with existing funds.

45. With regard to resolution D concerning technical assistance in the matter of human rights, the Secretariat had pointed out in section D of annex II that it was not in a position during the first year of application to submit estimates of the additional costs entailed under that head.

The task devolving on the Secretary-General in virtue of paragraph A(2) of the resolution, in the event of the adoption of the Commission's recommendations, would be greatly facilitated if the Governments would indicate the kind of assistance they intended to ask for in that field in 1956 and the following years. Failing such information, budgetary estimates would be sheer guesswork at that stage.

46. Finally, it should be emphasized that the programme of work of the Commission on International Commodity Trade was heavy. It included in particular the publication of a quarterly bulletin and a monthly news-sheet. The Secretariat had been anxious to inform the Commission how far the desired material might duplicate that published elsewhere. It had also gone into the question of the internal arrangements which would be necessary to enable that new task to be carried out with the available resources; but that was not altogether feasible, and staff increases seemed inevitable. With regard to that particular programme, however, it should be pointed out that the Commission had not yet been in existence when the Council had examined its objectives and priorities last year. It was therefore not possible for it to formulate any guiding principle in that field, and it was only now that it was called upon to decide whether the programme proposed by the Commission was in line with the general principles adopted in 1954.

47. He hoped that those few observations would help the Council in its consideration of the various items on its agenda and enable it to formulate its programme of work in accordance with the principles approved by it in 1954.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.