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AGENDA ITEMS 14 AND 15

CONTENTS

Agenda items 14 and 15:

Development of natural resources:

- (a) Co-ordinated action in the field of water resources;
- (b) Progress report on new sources of energy;
- (c) Work in the field of non-agricultural resources

Permanent sovereignty over natural resources

General debate (*concluded*) 157

Agenda item 23:

Report of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning

General debate 160

President : Sir Ronald WALKER (Australia)

Present :

Representatives of the following States, members of the Council: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, France, India, Iraq, Japan, Luxembourg, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yugoslavia.

Representatives of the following States, additional members of the sessional Committees: Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Madagascar, Mexico, United Arab Republic, United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

Observers for the following Member States: Brazil, Canada, Central African Republic, China, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Romania, Sweden, Venezuela.

Observers for the following non-member States: Federal Republic of Germany, Holy See.

Representatives of the following specialized agencies: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization.

Development of natural resources

- (a) Co-ordinated action in the field of water resources (E/3863, E/3881, E/3894/Rev.1);
- (b) Progress report on new sources of energy (E/3903);
- (c) Work in the field of non-agricultural resources (E/3904 and Corr.1; ST/ECA/82)

Permanent sovereignty over natural resources (E/3840)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. WHYTE (United Kingdom) said that item 14 of the agenda was concerned with some of the most practical, constructive and encouraging aspects of the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in assisting developing countries. The proposals in the Secretary-General's report (E/3863) for a priority programme of co-ordinated action in the field of water resources were substantially the same as those which his delegation had supported at the thirty-sixth session of the Council. No objections had been raised by members at that time, but the specialized agencies concerned had asked for a further opportunity to consider the proposals within the machinery of ACC and a series of inter-agency discussions had been held, resulting in the proposal that the United Nations Water Resources Development Centre should again become an integral part of the Resources and Transport Division in the United Nations Secretariat, and that responsibility for co-ordinating activities should lie with the Inter-Agency Meetings on Water Resources Development functioning as a sub-committee of the ACC (see E/3886, para. 98).

2. While his delegation had no objection to the proposal, it considered that the events of the past year further underlined both the need for better co-ordination and the failure to achieve it. In particular, the accounts of the activities of some of the specialized agencies suggested that each of them was determined to cover practically every aspect of the question; that applied in particular to the account given by WHO (see E/3863, annex II). Accordingly, the establishment of new inter-agency machinery might not in itself ensure much progress; but it was to be hoped that a serious attempt would be made to permit the effective functioning of the new machinery. The United Kingdom delegation considered that the Water Resources Development Centre was in a position to give the lead in the matter and should be encouraged to do so.

3. The Secretary-General's progress report on recent developments relating to new sources of energy (E/3903) was concerned with a subject which conjured up visions of what might be done, for example, in vast desert areas where traditional sources of energy were not available. It should be stressed, however, that from the practical and economic point of view new sources of energy were unlikely to make more than a marginal contribution to the energy needs of the world, or even of the developing countries. That fact had been generally recognized in the information on techniques for the use of solar energy, wind power and geothermal energy submitted to the United Nations Conference on New Sources of Energy in August 1961. In favourable circumstances, geothermal energy could be a valuable source of cheap power, but the possibilities were determined by accidents of geography; wind power and solar energy had as yet been exploited on a very small scale. The disadvantage of the so-called "free" sources of energy was that they required a high ratio of capital investment, although they could offer prospects of success in poor or thinly populated areas where import of energy was prohibitively expensive. It was therefore important not to pay undue attention to those new sources to the exclusion of conventional energy. With regard to the recommendations in paragraph 172 of the report, his delegation would suggest that, within the limits of available resources, recommendation (iii) was the most likely to yield results. On the other hand, it was not sure that enough development had taken place since the 1961 Conference to warrant holding further symposia on the applications of solar and geothermal energy. It strongly supported recommendation (vi) for strengthening the clearing-house activities of the United Nations in that field and suggested that a periodic bibliography of new work might be of more value than the manual on geothermal energy proposed in recommendation (v).

4. The Secretary-General's report on work in the field of non-agricultural resources (E/3904 and Corr. 1) related to such vitally important matters as cartography, geology and mining, energy and water resources. In that connexion, attention should be drawn to work on integrated river basin development, such as the Senegal river basin. That kind of work involved more than one country, many skills and a number of different agencies, and the United Nations Secretariat seemed to be particularly qualified to provide the necessary leadership and co-ordination. Few delegations had probably had time to study the long report on *Water Desalination in Developing Countries* (ST/ECA/82), but all must be aware of the tremendous possibilities of desalination. The co-operation between the United States and the USSR in that connexion was extremely interesting. The United Kingdom had supplied desalination equipment for many years to a number of countries and looked forward to sharing fully in any new developments of that technique.

5. His delegation considered that the report on permanent sovereignty over natural resources (E/3840) was useful, factual and non-controversial. He could not agree with the French representative that more attention should be paid to the philosophical aspects of the question; the United Kingdom delegation preferred the factual and

legal approach to the problem and would suggest that the Council should decide to take note of the report.

6. Mr. SILOVIC (Yugoslavia) associated himself with the speakers who had stressed the importance of the work done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the field of water resources development. Yugoslavia had abundant natural resources which, when better utilized, would undoubtedly speed up its economic development. Its large water resources were not yet utilized commensurately with the needs of industry and of the population, and the construction of hydro-electric and thermal power stations had a prominent place in its economic development plans; one of the most significant projects was the hydro-electric power station at the Iron Gate on the Romanian/Yugoslav border, which would be constructed through the joint efforts of the two countries. The project was a good example of international co-operation in developing natural resources, which was bound to benefit other Danubian countries. Several other projects were being carried out in Yugoslavia with the co-operation of the Special Fund, FAO, IBRD and IAEA.

7. There seemed to be general agreement on the need to co-ordinate activities in the field of water resources. The order of priorities proposed in the Secretary-General's report (E/3863) provided a solid basis for directing United Nations activities towards key problems; it was therefore necessary to lay even greater stress on co-ordination, in order to avoid unnecessary dispersion of effort and duplication.

8. He emphasized the role of the regional economic commissions in the development of natural resources. Those bodies were already engaged in important research work and some of them were carrying out large-scale projects. The Council should provide further incentives and give them wider possibilities, with a view to solving the urgent problems of all Member States, particularly those of the developing countries.

9. He welcomed the United States representative's statement on his country's co-operation with the USSR on the desalination of sea and brackish water. There could be no doubt that such co-operation would ultimately make the process of desalination of sea water more accessible to countries to which it was of vital interest but which lacked the necessary funds and personnel.

10. He agreed with the Czechoslovak representative (1335th meeting) that the Secretary-General's report on permanent sovereignty over natural resources did not fully comply with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII), in which the Secretary-General was asked to continue the study of the various aspects of the subject. Although the report gave a useful survey of various institutions, laws, international jurisdiction and treaties dealing with the question of sovereignty, it failed to provide an evaluation of those texts, a political analysis of their implications or any proposals for future action. An appropriate body of the United Nations might perhaps continue to study the problem. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development had adopted general principle three, according to which

every country had the sovereign right freely to trade with other countries and freely to dispose of its natural resources in the interest of the economic development and well-being of its people (see E/CONF.46/139, annex A.I.1). That was yet another significant step towards giving sovereignty over natural resources political and legal substance, and it was to be hoped that the United Nations would continue to exert efforts to assert, elaborate and fully implement the principle.

11. Mr. SALMAN (Iraq) observed that, as the United Nations had shown interest in the question of permanent sovereignty over natural resources since 1952, there could no longer be any doubt that that sovereignty constituted an unalienable national right and a recognized international principle. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Cairo Declaration of Developing Countries had stressed the importance of sovereignty over natural resources as a means of combating the growing disparity in the standards of living of the peoples of developing countries.

12. Paragraph 92 of the Secretary-General's report on permanent sovereignty over natural resources referred to Iraqi law No. 80 of 1961 defining the exploitation areas for the oil companies. The Government of Iraq had realized that the restriction of oil exploitation and prospecting throughout the country to one group of companies was prejudicial to the national interest, for the companies had not conducted exploitation on a scale commensurate with the extent of Iraq's oil resources. The companies had therefore been asked to relinquish the areas which they were not exploiting, in preparation for their utilization by the newly established national Iraqi oil company. The law affected only those areas where the companies had never used their right of exploitation, and the Government had declared that it had taken that legal step to guarantee the interests of the population without prejudice to the reasonable interests of the companies. Iraq's need to develop its national oil industry was most urgent, and it hoped to receive more assistance from the United Nations in that connexion.

13. Another important natural resource of the economy was natural gas, which was being wasted by foreign enterprises. The United Nations might be interested in promoting gas projects in the developing countries and in the oil-producing countries in particular. In 1950 FAO had conducted an extensive study on the use of ammonium extracts from natural gas as fertilizer, but the study had not been followed up.

14. The Secretariat had rightly given priority to the subject of water resources, for water was one of the major factors determining the prosperity of a country and was of paramount importance in the improvement of the agricultural sector. Iraq's problems in relation to water comprised flooding, irrigation, drainage, salinity of land and such health problems as malaria and bilharzia; the solution of those problems required a great deal of research and much technically qualified personnel. International assistance could be most effectively given through integrated programmes, and co-ordination was therefore important, not only within the United Nations

family but also between international and national measures and activities. Iraq had received short-term assistance from FAO in land levelling and water utilization in irrigation; it hoped that more assistance of that kind would be extended in future.

15. Mr. MIGONE (Argentina) said that Argentina, as a developing country with a vast territory and an abundance of untapped resources, regarded the development of natural resources as the basis for all development plans. International co-operation, which did not affect national sovereignty and planning, was extremely valuable, since all such projections required large initial investment which could not be furnished from national capital markets. Accordingly, Argentina attached great importance to pre-investment within the framework of the United Nations Development Decade.

16. The programmes being studied by the United Nations Water Resources Development Centre were particularly valuable, and it was to be hoped that the activities of the Centre would be pursued with increasing vigour. Argentina was anxious for the co-ordination of activities to be improved at all levels, in order that the available resources might be used to the maximum effect and that duplication and dispersion of effort might be avoided. He did not think it was necessary to create any new machinery for that purpose; it should be enough for the Council to approve the proposals in the Secretary-General's note on the future of the Centre (E/3894/Rev.1). It would also be logical to embark on a broad programme of work, designed to fill existing gaps. His delegation could support the proposals in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 of the Secretary-General's report (E/3863), and hoped that the preliminary surveys of water needs and resources and of international river basins and ground-water basins would provide a basis for future pre-development studies and specific development projects.

17. While the report on work in the field of non-agricultural resources (E/3904) was of great interest, his delegation thought that the proposed plans and programmes should be fixed in a strict order of priority, so as to achieve the proper relationship between existing resources and the execution of plans.

18. His delegation attached great importance to the question of desalination, and congratulated the Secretariat on its illuminating report on the subject. Desalination could bring incalculable benefits to arid regions, particularly in developing countries, and it was to be hoped that desalination plants could be installed on an international basis. The United Nations could make a valuable contribution through studies on the technical and economic aspects of the problem. Present desalination methods were uneconomical, and efforts to find a practical and economic method should be intensified. The co-operation between the United States and the USSR in that field was therefore particularly welcome and it was to be hoped that that co-operation would soon be extended to many other areas, for the benefit of mankind. Atomic energy might be harnessed and applied to desalination. The Argentine delegation, together with other Latin American countries, had drafted a proposal

on that question which it would submit to the Economic Committee.

19. The PRESIDENT declared the general debate closed and suggested that items 14 and 15 should be referred to the Economic Committee for further study and consideration of proposals.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 23

Report of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning

(E/3858, E/3886 and Corr.1 and Add.1, E/3912, E/3918)

GENERAL DEBATE

20. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the report of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning on its second session (E/3858), paragraphs 99 to 103 of the report of ACC (E/3886 and Corr. 1) and the Secretary-General's report on co-ordination and organization of existing programmes in housing, building and planning (E/3918).

21. Mr. WILLIAMS (United States of America) said that for more than thirty years his Government had encouraged home building and ownership on a large scale through a mortgage guarantee programme of vast scope and through the provision of federal insurance to savings and loan associations. Over the same period it had been heavily involved in aiding housing construction for low-income groups and, more recently, it had moved into the field of urban planning and renewal, while also recognizing the need for government assistance in the related fields of mass transit and community facilities. Recognizing the special housing needs associated with the growth of higher education, his Government had instituted a programme of assistance in the construction of student housing. It had also initiated a direct-loan programme for moderate-income rental and co-operative housing for the elderly.

22. These programmes and others in the same field assumed in their entirety considerable economic importance. While they stimulated and maintained substantial economic activity, they had their roots in the social needs of the community. He wished to make it clear that those government programmes supplemented rather than replaced private industry, private finance and private initiative.

23. His delegation did not contend that the United States approach was necessarily applicable in all environments. Nor did it wish to convey the impression that it was altogether satisfied with the results achieved. In fact, his Government was constantly trying to improve its performance. What his delegation wished to stress was that in the national political, social and economic setting it had found that type of arrangement, combining private and public, and federal, state and local efforts to be the most satisfactory.

24. At the international level, his Government was fully cognizant of the interrelationship between housing, building and planning, and economic and social development. Aware as it was of the urgent housing needs in many countries faced with rapid increases in population and urbanization, it had long included housing as a fitting area for treatment in its bilateral aid programmes. It would be remembered that it had also urged the establishment of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning. It was glad to note from the Committee's report that the Committee had made solid, if unspectacular, progress.

25. His delegation might have a number of points to make in the Social Committee in connexion with the three draft resolutions which the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning had submitted for action by the Council. Meanwhile, he would merely state that his delegation supported the proposal in draft resolution III for the establishment, within the limits of the present United Nations budget, of a Centre for Housing, Building and Planning. It was glad that the Secretary-General was inclined to support the establishment of such a centre within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. He also noted that proposals before the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions included the establishment of a post of Commissioner for Social Development and Housing at the under-secretary level (see E/3918, para. 10).

26. Mr. HILL (Australia) said that in view of its own experience in housing, Australia was particularly sensitive to the importance and gravity of the housing problem. At the end of the Second World War, during which all available resources had been diverted to the war effort, it had been faced with a serious housing shortage. The rate of dwelling construction, both by private enterprise and by state housing authorities, had since been greatly increased, but Australia's rapid population growth, particularly through immigration, had intensified the housing problem in Australia, and it remained a live issue.

27. Under the federal system of government in Australia, housing was mainly a matter for the state governments and local authorities. In recognition of the continuing importance of the problem, however, the Federal Government had recently created a Federal Ministry of Housing which would ensure government participation, as well as co-ordination at both the federal and the state level, in efforts to solve the housing problem. The Ministry was at present putting two new housing schemes into operation. One, designed to assist young married couples to purchase a house, provided for a tax-free government gift of cash; the other involved the creation of a government corporation to ensure private loans for housing up to a high proportion of the value of the security.

28. Although Australia was not a member of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, his Government was well aware of the importance and urgency of the problems which fell within its terms of reference. It had supported the establishment of the Committee at the Council's thirty-fourth session, and it still considered that

such a committee could contribute greatly to national and international efforts to deal with the world housing problem. The Committee's report showed that it had tackled the complicated questions facing it with vigour, while at the same time not losing sight of what might not be practicable. While his delegation might not agree with everything in the report, it wished to pay a tribute to the hard work of the members and to the value of the report. It seemed to his delegation that the house-building industry had benefited less than other industries from recent advances in science and technology and that it might with advantage be given attention by the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development.

29. His delegation would like to stress the critical importance of housing and environmental development in relation to both social and economic advancement. The most far-reaching and determined efforts to effect social and economic improvements would be largely negated unless a proper base was first laid by the provision of healthy and adequate housing and surroundings. It was with such considerations in mind that his delegation had been struck by some of the information given in paragraphs 16-19 of the Committee's report. There was on the one hand the staggering size of the housing needs in the three main under-developed regions and, on the other, the tragic fact that housing conditions had continued to deteriorate in most of the developing countries, and that in many of them the rate of housing construction was only 20 per cent of minimum needs. The many reasons for that situation included the high rate of population growth in most of those countries and the accelerating urban population growth combined with slow economic and industrial development. A great effort was clearly necessary at both the national and the international level if any headway was to be made towards remedying the situation.

30. With regard to draft resolution I submitted by the Committee for action by the Council, his delegation agreed that the State must play a major role in housing, building and planning in any country and particularly in developing countries where the basic needs were great. At the same time, it should be remembered that there was an important role in those fields for private enterprise. On that point, his delegation had noted the Committee's suggestion, in paragraph 93 of the report, that an international conference on the development of building materials and construction industries, with special reference to industrialization, might be held in 1966 or 1967. That might fit in with his earlier suggestion in regard to the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development. His delegation would hope that such a conference would include representatives of private enterprise engaged in that sphere.

31. Draft resolution II requested the Secretary-General to initiate studies on industrialization of housing and to set in motion an extensive international exchange of experience on that subject. His delegation felt that both those steps could be of considerable value, particularly to developing countries, and it would be happy to support the draft resolution.

32. His delegation had studied draft resolution III and the sections of the Committee's report relating to it. In particular, it had noted the proposal that a Centre for Housing, Building and Planning should be established within the United Nations Secretariat in place of the present Housing, Building and Planning Branch. His delegation had an open mind on the matter and would be interested to hear the views of other delegations. While it was willing to fall in with the wishes of the majority, it noted that the regional economic commissions had played an important role in housing, and it wondered whether international housing problems might not be best handled through those commissions, with any necessary co-ordination entrusted to the Secretariat and the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning.

33. Mr. NADIM (Iran) said that it was hardly necessary to stress the importance of the housing and building question both for developed and for developing countries. It was stated in paragraph 16 of the report that in order to attain the minimum objective set for economic growth in the United Nations Development Decade the annual housing construction in the developing countries should be in the neighbourhood of ten dwelling units per 1,000 inhabitants. Over the past ten years that rate had not been achieved; on the contrary, the housing situation in most of the developing countries had deteriorated and the construction rate had been only two units per 1,000 inhabitants.

34. It was obvious that the countries themselves should bear the major responsibility for remedying the situation and should not rely solely on international financial aid. Iran was aware of its responsibilities in that field and had adopted a number of measures to improve the housing situation. More than 80 per cent of Iran's population lived in inadequate and unhealthy accommodation and until recently little had been done to deal with the problem. Over the past few years sporadic efforts had been made, but in the absence of specific plans those efforts had not been successful. Since the great social reforms, however, which had completely altered the structure of the country, the Iranian Government had begun to concentrate on the problem. It had established a Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, and had allocated substantial funds to house-building programmes for low-income groups. In addition, special credits had been granted to establishments making building loans and to house construction companies. The Government had also started a large-scale programme for the reconstruction of villages and the construction of houses for peasants, having recourse to mutual aid and self-help methods. New legislation had been passed to check the excessive growth of towns. While the Iranian Government hoped to obtain some positive results over the next few years, it did not claim that it would be able to solve the problem entirely; to do that it would be necessary to build 2 million housing units in the next few years, which was virtually impossible in view of the economic situation and the lack of financial and technical resources. The other developing countries were in more or less the same position, and it was difficult for them to solve the problem without foreign aid. It was there that the importance of United Nations activities was felt.

35. The United Nations could do more to assist the developing countries in various ways. Firstly, emphasis should be placed on United Nations technical assistance and a reassessment of the present policy with respect to international financial contributions was needed. The housing and building sector did not receive its fair share of international assistance, and even if the existing resources were fairly allocated, they would be inadequate to make an effective contribution to the solution of the problem. That was why it was essential, as the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning had recommended (see E/3858, para. 57), that an appropriate share of the resources which would be released as a result of general disarmament should be devoted to housing, building and planning.

36. Secondly, his delegation felt that the pilot projects mentioned in the report were of particular importance, and it hoped that the United Nations would make greater use of the resources of the Special Fund and EPTA to implement them.

37. Lastly, his delegation was of the opinion that the work of the United Nations in the field of housing, building and planning should be strengthened. It strongly supported the proposal in draft resolution III for the reorganization of the Housing, Building and Planning Branch of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It shared the Committee's view that priority should be given in the Secretariat's work programme for 1965 to the establishment of the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning.

38. Before concluding, his delegation wished to draw the attention of members of the Council to two important questions which were dealt with in the report. The first was the role of social welfare methods in improving housing conditions. It was essential that families should be assisted to adjust satisfactorily to their new environment. Successful management of dwelling houses and success in educating the occupiers depended on good physical, social, economic and technical planning. His delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would complete the study of the social aspects of housing and urban development and it supported the suggestion that seminars should be organized on the topic.

39. The second point concerned the role of the United Nations in the event of disasters, a question of great topical interest in view of the large number of natural disasters which had occurred in recent years. The report rightly stated that some of the damage could have been prevented if sound principles had been followed in planning and building, and if better techniques had been employed. At the present time, neither the United Nations nor any one of the specialized agencies were in a position to solve all the problems connected with a natural disaster. The United Nations should play a more important role in organizing assistance and provide effective and speedy aid at the various stages of reconstruction following a disaster.

40. Mr. EGOROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning had adopted a number of important decisions

with a view to the speedy solution of the housing problem. The Committee's work programme for 1964-1965 was particularly important in that it promoted the detection of social and economic problems conditioning the serious housing shortage. The work programme devoted attention to the technical aspects of housing, to the organization of various seminars on a regional and interregional basis and to pilot projects. The Committee had drawn up and adopted interesting recommendations concerning the industrialization of building and building materials and the establishment and development of a national building industry in developing countries. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the importance of applying the results of scientific and technical advances to the housing field was recognized in the report but it could not agree with the statement in paragraph 18 that the chief reason for the deterioration in the housing situation in most developing countries in the last decade was the continued high rate of population growth. The other reasons given in paragraphs 19 and 20 were more acceptable. The main reasons for the deterioration, however, were the slow economic development of countries which had been or still were under colonial administration, private ownership of land which led to land speculation, the dominating position of foreign companies in the economic life of such countries, a lack of knowledge of national resources, the lack of planning, the absence of an efficient building industry and the lack of financial resources.

41. It was well known that the housing situation was far from satisfactory in many developed western countries, too. It was clear that all the efforts and resources of countries needed to be mobilized and that a successful solution of housing problems was not possible without fundamental social reforms designed to accelerate social and economic development.

42. His delegation attached great importance to draft resolution I, not only because the implementation of its provisions would contribute to the solution of the housing problem in developing countries but also because it proposed the most effective means of solving the problem. He hoped that it would be adopted unanimously.

43. Draft resolution II was also important. Draft resolution III contained interesting and useful proposals, but while his delegation agreed on the desirability of having the greatest possible co-ordination of United Nations activities in the field in question, it could not agree with the proposal in operative paragraph 2. It seemed to his delegation that the establishment of such a centre under present conditions would result only in additional expenditure for administrative purposes without in any way solving the housing problem. The regional economic commissions and the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning and other organizations were successfully co-ordinating their efforts regarding housing, and he could see no need for the establishment of a different administrative body attached to United Nations Headquarters. His delegation would accordingly support draft resolution III only if operative paragraph 2 was deleted. His Government would continue to do everything in its power to develop fruitful activities of the United Nations in the housing field, and it recognized the importance of

that work. That was why it could not support a proposal to channel resources earmarked for the operational sector to the administrative sector.

44. The USSR had acquired considerable expertise in large-scale housing construction, which could be of great value to the developing countries. In 1963, some 2.5 million housing units had been constructed, double the number built in 1953. Total investment in community facilities at present amounted to more than 130,000 million roubles. A vast programme of school and hospital construction was to be carried out in 1964. The housing shortage in the Soviet Union would be ended by 1970. The great progress that had been achieved was due to the state planning organization, the establishment of a technical basis for the building industry and the training of sufficient skilled staff. The USSR Government was willing to help other countries to solve their housing problems. It was prepared to arrange study tours for engineers and builders from Africa, Asia and the Middle East so that they could acquire first-hand knowledge of the methods employed. The example of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries had shown that when the Government and the people made every possible effort to satisfy the needs of the working population great strides could be made in solving the housing problem.

Mr. Chanderli (Algeria), second Vice-President, took the Chair.

45. Mr. PURUSHOTTAM (India) congratulated the Committee on its comprehensive report. Apart from stressing the need to build as much housing as possible in the shortest possible time, the Committee had focused attention on the problems facing the under-developed countries, and had made a number of important recommendations.

46. He supported the proposal in draft resolution III for the reorganization of the Housing, Building and Planning Branch through the establishment of a Centre for Housing, Building and Planning in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. He, too, regarded it as a first step forward in the development of an integrated and comprehensive United Nations unit in the field of housing, building and planning.

47. He regretted that the report had not dealt sufficiently with the problems of methods of training and research. National centres for research, training and information should be set up with financial assistance from the United Nations wherever necessary.

48. The Committee had considered a proposal for the establishment of an international centre for documentation on housing, building and planning. The fact that the International Council for Building Research, Studies and Documentation was already doing valuable work on that subject should be taken into consideration in order to avoid duplication. He drew attention to paragraphs 92 and 93 of the report and pointed out that if the International Council for Building Research, Studies and Documentation was to hold a congress in 1965, it would not be wise for the United Nations to organize a con-

ference in 1966 or 1967. He thought there should be a gap of at least three years between the congress and the conference.

49. If the proposal to set up an international centre were approved, he would point out that adequate facilities already existed in India for the purpose. India had a research institute, a strong documentation centre and the nucleus of a planning centre in the School of Planning and Architecture at Delhi.

50. His delegation did not think that it would be possible for the Governments of the developing countries to obtain additional resources internally for housing and environmental development. It was clear that the current flow of capital to the developing countries for the housing sector was inadequate, and was likely to continue to be so in the near future. It was indeed strange that the housing sector, which accounted for 20 per cent of gross investment in many countries, had not been receiving its due share of international assistance. The Committee's work programme could be carried out only if the United Nations activities in the housing, building and planning fields received an appropriate share of United Nations funds. It was incumbent on the United Nations to take the necessary steps to ensure an increased flow of international funds to the field of housing and urban development. He hoped that some of the funds released by disarmament would be channelled into housing.

51. His delegation was in general agreement with the definition and aims of the pilot projects as given in the report, as also with the basic criteria laid down. He would also emphasize the need to provide for the implementation of pilot projects in developing countries. That was already being done in India, where a provision of \$2,000,000 for pilot projects for urban and rural housing had been made in the third Five-Year Plan. There was a well-developed co-operative housing scheme for low-income groups, which had received government assistance. Unfortunately, however, all India's efforts, as those of other under-developed countries, had failed, for lack of finance, to meet rising needs. He wished also to stress the importance of more active and co-ordinated participation by regional economic commissions in the organization of the work on housing at the national level. In his view, the regional housing centres should be strengthened.

52. Mr. ILIC (Yugoslavia) recalled that at the thirty-sixth session of the Council his delegation had drawn attention to the difficulties which the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning had had to overcome at the outset of its work and to the complex and heterogeneous character of its field of action, and had emphasized that progress in that field must go hand in hand with general economic and social progress.

53. After studying the Committee's report on its second session, his delegation wished to give full credit to the Committee for the work it had accomplished and for the determination with which that work had been undertaken. He shared the view that the first results achieved had had a definite effect and that housing and environment development must be treated as key sectors.

54. The deterioration in the housing situation during the last decade, particularly in the developing countries, attributed in paragraph 18 of the Committee's report to the continued high rate of population growth, was due also in large measure to the slow rate of the economic growth of such countries, their lack of adequate financial resources and other such factors. The mobilization of all the efforts and resources of those countries was an important factor in solving housing problems.

55. His delegation supported the suggestions on methods and policies in paragraph 22 of the report, and would vote in favour of draft resolution I. He wished to emphasize once again the gravity of the problem of finance. At the thirty-sixth session his delegation had supported the Committee's view on the necessity for using the limited international funds available to stimulate domestic resources, giving priority to such matters as technical training, pilot projects, housing loans and the creation of national building materials industries. It therefore agreed that all possibilities of promoting a greater flow of resources, both national and international, to that sector should be seriously studied.

56. His delegation continued to support the carrying out of pilot projects but reiterated that they should not be an end in themselves but should stimulate Governments to continue the activities concerned after the termination of United Nations assistance.

57. The rejection by the Committee of the joint draft resolution on the establishment of a specialized agency for human settlements (E/C.6/L.32) had not reflected the overwhelming support of the Committee for the need to strengthen the programme of United Nations activities in that field.

58. His delegation considered that the measures proposed in draft resolution III were acceptable as a first step in the development of those activities, and it would support the draft resolution as a contribution towards that end.

59. The Yugoslav delegation also supported the measures mentioned in the Secretary-General's report.

60. Mr. MAZHAR (United Arab Republic) said that the United Arab Republic was already proceeding on the lines recommended in paragraph 22 of the report. His Government was assuming a major role in the solution of the housing problem, and had made provision for the necessary activities and resources under its national development plan. Between 1952 and 1960 tens of thousands of dwellings had been sold at low prices, payable by instalments, to low-income families. Those efforts extended to villages: combined service units had been created, land reforms had been carried out, and villages destroyed by disasters had been rebuilt. Under the current Five-Year Plan (1960-1965), the Government had allocated £175 million for building new dwellings, mainly to meet needs which could not be satisfied by private enterprise. A Ministry of Housing had been created and regional bodies set up to carry out its plans. A building research centre, concerned primarily with building materials, design and new building techniques, had been established. Programmes for training architects

and engineers were so far advanced that the services of their graduates were being sought by many other countries. Co-operative schemes for land ownership and land utilization were making a major contribution to the building of thousands of new houses and blocks of flats. His Government hoped that the adoption of the Committee's report, with its recommendation for assistance to developing countries, would help it in its rapid advance in housing, building and planning.

61. The Secretary-General stated in his report (see E/3918, para. 9) that he was inclined to support the establishment of a Centre for Housing, Building and Planning within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as recommended in draft resolution III. The proposal was linked to the proposed establishment of a post of Commissioner for Social Development and Housing. Although that proposal differed from the deliberations of the Committee in so far as it linked housing with social development, it was in line with the Committee's fundamental objectives and was a happier solution both for administrative reasons and for reasons of principle. Housing was a social question, and formed an integral post of social development.

62. Mr. COMBAL (France) said that housing, building and planning problems were closely associated with economic development and the drift of population to the towns. They arose in the most highly industrialized countries and their human and social repercussions were always extremely serious.

63. The Committee's report confirmed the wisdom of setting up that body even if it had sometimes tended in the course of its debates to exceed its competence. His delegation welcomed the assistance the report gave the Council in defining more precisely the types of activity which the United Nations should undertake in that field and in taking stock of the measures of co-ordination and organization they involved.

64. The immense scale and universal scope of housing and planning needs clearly excluded any form of direct action. All that the United Nations could do was to carry out studies and provide technical assistance in the strictest sense of the term. Discussions in the Committee showed that the principal aim should be the transfer of technology, the devising of priority measures through pilot projects and the encouragement of the industrialization of building activities. A wide range of experience was being gathered throughout the world, which was not always known outside the countries concerned; the overriding need was to assemble that knowledge and disseminate as widely as possible the solutions and techniques which had been devised. The Committee had referred to a definition of planning which underlined the close links between economic and social planning and physical planning, the latter of which sought to bring physical and human resources to the service of the objectives chosen by the former. It was therefore essential that all those responsible for development plans should have a firm grasp of the principles of town planning and the development of the physical environment and that architects and town planners should be fully acquainted with the rules and methods of economic and social

planning. For those reasons, his delegation endorsed the idea of the establishment of an international centre for documentation.

65. The carrying out of pilot projects could yield interesting results, especially as the Committee had proposed that teams of experts should be sent and as the programme aimed at environment development and the construction of houses by the most economical means, possibly by the labour of the people concerned. The industrialization of building was undoubtedly one of the keys to the solution of the quantitative problem of housing. It was linked to the international standardization of prefabricated units and the widest possible dissemination of tried techniques.

66. Those various forms of activity raised problems of finance, but, since only strictly technical assistance was involved, their financial implications were limited and they could be carried out within the limits of existing resources. The Committee had rightly drawn the attention of the administrators of the Special Fund and EPTA to the necessity of giving special attention to the questions within its sphere of competence.

67. In view of the ramifications of the problems involved, it had been rightly decided that the Committee's reports should be examined not only by the Social Commission but also by the Committee for Industrial Development. The link between industrialization and building was self-evident since building and environment development were closely dependent on economic progress and also represented a branch of activity in which investments were subject to a high factor of multiplication. The Committee's report was also considered by the regional economic commissions, and ECE, in particular, had long since established a Housing Committee. Those examples should be followed, and the results of the Committee's work should be made known to all bodies dealing with economic development or technical assistance. The Committee's range of activity was a clear example of the close interrelation of economic and social development.

68. His delegation supported the establishment of a Centre for Housing, Building and Planning within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It was opposed to the establishment of a new specialized agency, which would entail unnecessary expense and make no contribution to the solution of problems in that field. It had some difficulty in understanding the suggestion mentioned in the Secretary-General's report for the establishment of a post of Commissioner for Social Development and Housing; that would merely reinforce the regrettable tendency to make a sharp distinction between economic and social problems, and would unjustifiably limit the consideration of housing questions to their social aspects.

69. The French delegation was convinced that once the outstanding administrative problems had been solved, the Committee would be able to make a valuable contribution to the Council's work in that field.

70. Mr. MAROUF (Algeria) said that housing and unemployment were among the most acute problems

faced by the developing countries, and that the situation could only be aggravated in the future by the high rate of population growth in those countries unless a considerable effort in the form of financing, technical assistance and organization were made. The scope of the problem became clear when it was realized that there were between ten and twenty occupants per house in Africa. A recent study showed that in Algeria the number of dwellings occupied by more than the ideal figure of four persons exceeded 1,050,000, two-thirds of which were situated in rural areas. Furthermore, it was expected that the population of Algeria would almost double in the next twenty years. The task of meeting those tremendous needs was far beyond the financial and technical resources of the under-developed countries. Only a concerted programme of activity by the United Nations family, supported by the efforts of the countries directly concerned, could reduce the deficit. New sources of funds proportionate to those needs would have to be found. The various United Nations bodies should give increased attention to the problem, and some of the resources released by disarmament should be devoted to financing the building programmes of the developing countries. Such a manifestation of international solidarity would have favourable repercussions, not only in the housing sector, but also on the economic development of those countries, by contributing to the expansion of the building materials industry.

71. Financing alone, however, would be ineffective if the technical conditions for carrying out programmes were not created. It was well known that the lack of technicians was a serious obstacle to the economic expansion of the developing countries. Programmes on that scale would require closer co-operation than ever between the various bodies concerned.

72. His delegation would state its attitude to the various resolutions in the Social Committee.

73. Mr. ZEVALLOS (Ecuador) said that his delegation would support the draft resolutions in the report.

74. Like all developing countries, Ecuador was faced with a housing problem to which it devoted special attention. Thanks to support from the Government of Ecuador, the assistance of savings banks and the financial assistance of the Inter-American Development Bank, it had been possible, some two years previously, to establish the Housing Bank of Ecuador. The Housing Bank had been able to make timely advances to various mutual benefit societies and housing co-operatives which had enabled them to help their members and had thus made it possible for private savings to contribute to the solution of the housing problem. Owing to the fact that the Housing Bank had been so recently established, much remained to be done before it would be possible to embark on a nation-wide programme of low-cost housing especially intended for low-income groups. The Bank was not only contributing to the building programme, but also made funds available to the building material industry. What was required, however, was not only the provision of advances for building and the development of the building materials industry, but also the under-

taking of serious studies on building techniques applicable to low-cost housing. For that reason his delegation was interested in the programme of pilot projects, which he hoped would enable many studies to be carried out which

would gather and disseminate valuable experience for the benefit of all the developing countries.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.