

izations should rectify their incorrect attitude that there were "Two Chinas" or "One China, One Taiwan" and expel the Chiang gang elements in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council.

16. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to adopt the recommendation in paragraph 4.

*It was so decided.*

#### Paragraph 5

17. Mr. BUKHARI (Pakistan) pointed out that in paragraph 5 the words "to participate" appeared to have been omitted after the words "should be designated".

18. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to adopt the recommendation in paragraph 5, with that correction.

*It was so decided.*

#### Paragraph 6

19. Mr. SCHWARTZ-GIRÓN (Spain) said that it had been agreed in consultations among countries of all groups that GATT should continue to participate on the same footing as before. There was therefore no need to take any action on paragraph 6.

*It was so decided.*

#### Paragraphs 7 and 8

20. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to adopt the recommendations in paragraphs 7 and 8.

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 4.5 p.m.*

## 1974th meeting

Thursday, 24 July 1975, at 10.50 a.m.

*President:* Mr. I. A. AKHUND (Pakistan)

E/SR.1974

### AGENDA ITEM 5

#### International Women's Year (E/5725)

1. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider agenda item 5, on International Women's Year.

2. Mrs. SIPILÄ (Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Secretary-General of International Women's Year and of the World Conference of the Year recalled that when, in December 1972, the General Assembly had proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year (Assembly resolution 3010 (XXVII)), the holding of a conference had not been envisaged and any programme for the Year had had to be financed from existing resources. When the Economic and Social Council had called upon the Secretary-General, in 1974, to convene a conference within the context of International Women's Year (Council resolution 1849 (LVI)), there had been some scepticism about the prospects of a conference organized at such short notice and with a budget of only \$250,000. The World Population Conference, for instance, had been prepared over a four-year period and had had a budget of more than \$2 million. The Secretariat, however, had had confidence in the success both of the conference and of International Women's Year, and the results achieved so far had exceeded its most optimistic expectations.

3. Nothing was more powerful than an idea that came at the right time, as the past six months and the World Conference of the International Women's Year had clearly demonstrated. Success would have been impossible, however, without the interest shown by governmental and non-governmental circles in all parts of the world and without the active participation of the entire United

Nations system. Sixty-nine countries had announced the establishment of national committees consisting of representatives of ministries, government offices, non-governmental organizations and individuals. Eighty-nine countries had appointed liaison officers and it was hoped that they would continue beyond 1975 to keep the Secretariat informed of national developments affecting the situation of women.

4. International Women's Year was the first national and world-wide comprehensive effort to study the status and role of women in the light of internationally adopted standards for the achievement of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities. It was also the first real national and world-wide attempt to translate into action some of the important goals of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade<sup>1</sup> and it was a call for action to increase women's contribution to the development of friendly relations among States and to the strengthening of international peace. There was a realistic hope that before the end of the year national plans would have been adopted in almost all countries in order to achieve those goals.

5. The contribution of the national and international non-governmental organizations had been remarkable. The International Women's Year had also attracted strong support from voluntary workers, the world Press and other mass media. She wished to take the opportunity to thank the Governments and other donors from both industrialized and developing countries, even from the least developed ones, for the contributions they had paid or pledged to the

<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV), of 24 October 1970.

voluntary fund opened by the Secretary-General in accordance with Council resolution 1850 (LVI).

6. The specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies had played an active part in the Conference and had adopted resolutions providing for the promotion of the year's objectives. The regional commissions had played an important part; ESCAP and ECA had each adopted regional plans designed to promote the integration of women in development (ESCAP resolution 157 (XXXI); ECA resolution 269 (XII)).

7. The growing interest in the year and in the implementation of principles, programmes and strategies adopted during the past decade was explained not only by the importance attached to the principle of equality of all human beings but also by the increasingly evident interaction between the status of women and economic and social development. The programmes of the Year and the World Conference had increased the awareness of that interaction and of its impact on the various world problems.

8. Despite its rapid preparation, the World Conference, held at Mexico City from 19 June to 2 July 1975, had demonstrated the interest shown by Governments and by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the question. For the first time in United Nations history, women had formed the majority among the delegations of the 133 Governments represented, and most delegations had been headed by women. After naming some of the personalities who had attended the Conference and giving some details of how the Conference had been organized, she paid a tribute to the President of Mexico and Mrs. Echevarría, to Mr. Ojeda Paullada, the President of the Conference, to the Mexican Government and officials and to the United Nations staff who had made the Conference a success.

9. The Conference had been the culminating point of International Women's Year: it had adopted a large number of recommendations included in the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of International Women's Year, in the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace, 1975, and in 34 resolutions, which would certainly influence United Nations activities for many years to come. Its report (E/5725) would enable the Council to review the progress made in the achievement of the objectives of the Year and to take whatever decisions it deemed appropriate.

10. The delegations at the Conference had shared the view that issues concerning women could not be dealt with in isolation but must be linked to present-day political, economic and social realities. The Conference had, for instance, been led to pronounce on such questions as Palestinian and Arab women, the status of women in Namibia, the question of the Panamanian territory known as the Canal Zone, the situation of women in Chile, and women's participation in the struggle against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination and foreign domination.

11. The Conference had emphasized the need for a new economic order based on the Charter of Economic Rights

and Duties of States.<sup>2</sup> It had noted that three quarters of mankind was faced with urgent and pressing social and economic problems; since women were the hardest hit, there was need to improve their situation and to define their role in development. The principles of the United Nations Charter referring to equality of rights between men and women, economic and social progress and international co-operation in the social field had served as a framework for many of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the Conference. Social progress and improvements in the quality of life could not be automatically obtained through an increase in GNP: the human element had also to be taken into account. The Conference had noted the negative impact which the precarious status of women had on undesirable population growth, the world food shortage and under-development. The under-utilization of the potential of approximately half the world population was an obstacle to economic and social progress. The role of women differed from country to country, but it was significant that all the decisions and recommendations aimed at the elimination of discrimination against women had been adopted unanimously. By contrast, the position of delegations had not been uniform in the adoption of recommendations relating to political issues or to the new international economic order. The view prevailed in some quarters that the poor record of implementation of United Nations resolutions often resulted from a lack of consensus in their adoption. The Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had envisaged consultative procedures to bring about general agreement on key issues (E/AC.62/9, paras. 97-103). The Conference, however, had been unanimous about the urgent need for action to eliminate discrimination against women and to improve their status, and had urged the General Assembly to proclaim 1975-1985 as the United Nations Decade for Women and Development, so as to ensure sustained national and international action throughout the period.

12. At the national level, it had been generally felt that Governments should give priority consideration to the elimination of sex discrimination and the integration of women in development. The Conference had referred specifically to a series of projects to be undertaken in sectors where the situation of women remained most precarious. The World Plan of Action envisaged the establishment of interdisciplinary or multisectoral commissions for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunity for women. Those commissions should include both women and men as a precondition for successful results, since the advancement of women would benefit the community at large.

13. At the international level, the Conference had called upon Governments to increase the number of women in their delegations, and upon the United Nations to recognize its responsibilities for setting an example to Member States in employment and personnel practices. It had recommended that the Council should request the Secretary-General to undertake a series of projects, including a report on the participation of women in the strengthening of world peace and the elimination of *apartheid*, racism, racial

<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX), of 12 December 1974.

discrimination, colonialism and foreign domination. It had also urged that priority should be given in 1976 to the preparation and adoption of a convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.

14. The Conference had adopted specific recommendations for the effective implementation of its resolutions. It had urged the Council to recommend the necessary steps for strengthening the organizational unit of the Secretariat concerned with the implementation of the World Plan of Action, establishing an international research institute for the promotion of women, and organizing a second world conference in 1980.

15. The Conference and the Group of Experts on the Structure of the System had made conflicting recommendations: whereas the Group of Experts sought to improve world economic co-operation by liquidating the Commission on the Status of Women, the Conference had unanimously recommended the continuing operation of the Commission or of some other representative body designed to deal solely with problems relating to the status of women. It had deemed one or the other body essential to ensure the implementation of the programmes set forth in the World Plan of Action and to permit the interchange of views and the formulation of principles pertaining to the status of women. The Group of Experts had presumably not envisaged the survival of the organizational unit responsible for the implementation of the programme or of the Commission for Social Development.

16. By contrast, the Conference had urged the Council to take the necessary steps to provide the regional commissions with the necessary staff and other resources for the development of regional programmes to implement the Plan of Action. It had also recommended that the organizational unit responsible for the implementation of the Plan of Action should be enabled to support more effectively existing programmes and develop new ones, in co-operation with all organizations of the United Nations system. In view of the multiplicity and diversity of the projects unanimously recommended by the Conference, the Council might wish to explore the advisability of a mixed expert group to advise on the organizational structure best suited for global co-operation in the social field.

17. The Conference had recommended the establishment of an international research and training institute for the promotion of women, to be financed by voluntary contributions; its purpose would be to undertake research into the situation of women on behalf of the organizational unit of the Secretariat responsible for the implementation of the Plan of Action, in co-operation with the United Nations University and other interested educational institutions. The specialized agencies and the regional commissions would be invited to take an active role in its operation.

18. The Conference which the General Assembly was invited to organize for 1980 would be required to review and assess the implementation of the World Plan of Action and correlated resolutions on the elimination of sex discrimination and the integration of women in the development process. The organization of the conference would entail minimal budgetary appropriations.

19. The Conference had not lost sight of the financial implications of its decisions and recommendations, including the Plan of Action. It had invited the Secretary-General, in consultation with the specialized agencies and other United Nations organizations, to present a report to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session advising on the way in which additional funds, contributed for the express purpose of the integration of women in development, could best be canalized and administered through appropriate United Nations bodies.

20. In conclusion, she stressed that a dynamic multi-sectoral approach was essential for the successful implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Conference. The improvement of the status of women and the integration of women in the life of society required a multidisciplinary effort at the national, regional and global levels. The planning of the implementation process had already started at the *ad hoc* Inter-Agency meeting on the International Women's Year which had been held on 21 and 22 July 1975. She was convinced that the spirit of co-operation displayed by all United Nations bodies at that meeting would lead to the early elaboration of a dynamic global programme which would not only benefit women and, indirectly, children, entire families and societies but would help to improve the quality of life everywhere.

21. Ms. URBINA (Mexico) said that the report before the Council showed how important were the results achieved at the World Conference of the International Women's Year, which had adopted many resolutions and a Declaration of general principles on action to improve the status of women. At the conference, the participants had become increasingly aware of the serious problems affecting one half of mankind and had decided to initiate international co-operation to ensure the equality of men and women and women's participation in the solution of those problems.

22. In order to demolish the structures which kept women in a marginal situation, the three objectives set out in General Assembly resolution 3010 (XXVII) must be attained: equality between men and women, the participation of women in development and the contribution of women to world peace. The co-operation envisaged could not be effective so long as there were inequities. It was the responsibility of each country to take the necessary action within its borders to give effect to the decisions adopted. International organizations would have to co-operate for the achievement of those objectives and periodically review the progress made.

23. The decisions of the Conference ran along two parallel lines. With regard to the problems specific to women, there were resolutions on health, employment, education, the family, participation, promotion, and the need to study the questions connected with the status of women. The other decisions concerned fundamental changes in the national and international structures which prevented the fundamental needs of marginal groups, which included the majority of women, from being satisfied. The necessary action to give effect to those resolutions remained to be taken. Governments, United Nations bodies and individuals should be guided by the World Plan of

Action and should apply the principles of the Declaration of Mexico.

24. The points of concern that were mentioned in the introduction and chapter I of the World Plan – problems concerning development, women in rural areas, women in employment, connexions between international questions and the status of women, etc. – were dealt with in the many draft resolutions submitted, most of which had been adopted by consensus. The Plan of Action and the Declaration of Mexico were documents of unquestionable importance. Of course, only future generations would be able to assess the significance of the Conference, but it could be safely said that it marked the beginning of the transformation of the status of women. To deny that or to claim that the questions had not been thoroughly studied would be a deliberate disregard of what had happened at Mexico City. It was easy to understand the efforts made to distort the results of the Conference: to seek to make women the equals of men was a revolutionary step which frightened a great many people.

25. In order that women might participate on the same basis as men in social life, men and women must face the difficulties together. Women, however, had always lived on the fringe of society and did not yet enjoy complete equality, either *de facto* or *de jure*, with men. Those difficulties were compounded by the growing gap between developed and developing countries, the precarious state of world peace, the systematic violation of fundamental freedoms in some countries and the existence of enclaves of colonialism, environmental pollution, the arms race and international monetary disorders. It was therefore urgently necessary to change the outlook and ideas of people and to establish a new international economic order. Women could not remain indifferent in such a situation and must assume responsibilities equal to those of men in the reorganization of the international system and the elimination of international relationships that were completely out of date.

26. Since the ultimate purpose of development was to improve the quality of life for all, the new international economic order must be based on equity, sovereign equality, co-operation between States and the furtherance of economic and social progress. Furthermore, development did not only mean the economic growth of States, but also equality of opportunity in all fields where women, like men, should be able to develop their potential to the utmost.

27. It was still necessary to struggle to achieve the full integration of women in development. The Declaration of Mexico was based on principles already laid down in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The principles enshrined in the Declaration of Mexico gave a view of women and men which implied equality of opportunity and of duties for both, in the family and in society. The programmes and policies on which education was based should be changed so as to make it possible for the human being to develop to the full, while meeting the needs of development. She laid particular stress on the equality of men and women before the law, equality of opportunity in employment remuner-

ation and promotion and the importance of the right of free choice in matters of marriage and parenthood. All those aims must be pursued at the same time.

28. To proclaim that human relationships were governed by the principle of equality of rights as between men and women meant recognizing also that relations between States should be governed by the principles of sovereign equality, of the rights of peoples to self-determination, of territorial integrity and of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

29. It was natural that the Declaration of Mexico, which did not merely express simple aspirations but laid down policy guidelines to eliminate inequality, should be attacked by clearly reactionary elements. Those who did not understand the significance of that Declaration and of the other documents adopted by the Conference were precisely those who clung to patterns of behaviour which prevented them from taking part in the analysis of the issues faced by the modern world. Future generations, however, would understand that the adoption of the Declaration was the first attempt to tackle the problem of women in the light of the problems faced by society, and *vice versa*.

30. At the Conference, some causes which women had championed for a long time had been made clearer, certain points of view had changed and people had become aware of contemporary problems and of discrimination. Henceforth, issues concerning women would no longer be dealt with as if they were a separate problem but as an integral part of the problems faced by the modern world.

31. Her delegation was convinced that only by international co-operation could the problems be satisfactorily solved. The Economic and Social Council should adopt measures following up those of the Conference, so that the efforts of the international community would not be in vain and the recommendations would become a reality. It lay with the Council to ensure the continuation of the efforts made by the international community in proclaiming the objectives of International Women's Year, namely, equality, development and peace, and in convening the Conference.

*Mr. Longestaey (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

32. Ms. TURNBULL (Australia) said that at its 1972nd meeting, in considering the role being played by Zambia in the fight against racism in Zimbabwe, the Council had reaffirmed the principles of the United Nations Charter and in particular its faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women. It was therefore regrettable that so much still needed to be done merely to make the meaning of those words clear. Not only was the equality of women with men often disregarded, but so was their dignity. Sexual discrimination was even more insidious than racial discrimination; more widely tolerated and less widely recognized, it appeared in different forms in social attitudes, education, myths and prejudices, and the result was that women – regarded as “the second sex” – accepted

a second-rate part. At a time when there was increasing concern about food shortages and problems of development and social justice in the world, it was inadmissible to allow half the world's population to lag behind and to be denied the new social justice and the new social order for which the international community had joined battle.

33. Governments had an active part to play in the matter. Her Government was co-operating closely with non-governmental organizations and women's groups in Australia. Much had to be done at the community level and even at the level of the individual, in order to carry out a radical re-evaluation of social values. A strong political will was necessary for that.

34. At the international and regional levels, a concerted approach was necessary to reach the goal of a more balanced and more equitable social order. Her Government supported the regional plan of action adopted by ESCAP (see E/5656, resolution 157 (XXXI)), which laid stress on the integration of women in development. That plan showed that agreement was possible, not only at the regional level but also at the national level, on guidelines and programmes.

35. Her Government reserved its final position on the Declaration of Mexico, the World Plan of Action and the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Conference, since it had not yet had time to study them in detail. It nevertheless considered that the Conference had yielded positive results and it would play its part in the implementation of the World Plan of Action.

36. Just as United Nations bodies had dealt specifically with the problems of the least developed countries, so Governments and individuals should, as a matter of urgency, act on the decisions in the Conference report in order to improve the status of women.

37. Mr. DUMAS (France) thought that it was not a question of freeing women from their status as women but of giving them the means to assume that status in full. At the Mexico Conference, Mrs. Giroud, French Secretary of State for the Status of Women, had said that there was no question, either, of women liberating themselves from men. It was from their own prejudices and fears that women had to free themselves. The gap between the status of women and that of men must be reduced until it vanished, and for that it was necessary to define the action to be undertaken, maintained and continued in order to bring women to the point of sharing responsibilities of all kinds. That was why France endorsed the spirit which had inspired the Declaration of Mexico.

38. Although France was one of the countries that had advanced farthest towards *de jure* and *de facto* equality of men and women, it realized that it had much further to go and it therefore endorsed the guidelines laid down in the Declaration of Mexico. Considering the differences between States, it supported the principle that each country should decide upon its own strategy. It welcomed the recommendations of the Conference, particularly the idea that there was a clear link between development and the promotion of women. His delegation feared, however, that references to

texts for which some countries had not voted, and to regional political problems which had no direct connexion with the status of women, might stand in the way of the general agreement that was desirable.

39. His delegation, which held that statements of principle were not enough, hoped that the awareness and reflection brought about by the International Women's Year would bear fruit. To that end, the multidisciplinary and interministerial nature of the problems of women must not prevent attention and action being concentrated on a small number of points of specific concern to the status of women, to the exclusion of other issues which could be dealt with in other fora. Secondly, in addition to legal guarantees of equality, one priority must be affirmed: namely, identical compulsory free education for boys and girls, and its essential extension, which was information. He paid a tribute to the remarkable work done by women's non-governmental organizations, which his country felt sure would go on. The progress along the path upon which women were moving would be even more rapid if Governments, which had been made aware of the problems by International Women's Year, decided to recognize that women had a vocation as a power for the promotion of justice and a better quality of life.

40. Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands) said that the Mexico Conference had been important in drawing up an inventory of the problems of women, in permitting an exchange of data at world level, and in mobilizing public opinion, Governments and the whole United Nations system. The World Plan of Action adopted at the Conference laid down valuable guidelines for dealing with the various problems at the national level. The decisions adopted by the Conference must be implemented not only by Governments and the United Nations system but also by non-governmental organizations and private groupings. It was desirable that regional conferences should be held to see how the Plan of Action was being implemented at the regional level. His delegation had been one of the sponsors of Conference resolution 12 (Special resources for the integration of women in development) and his Government had offered to make additional contributions for projects to make women more aware of their position and role in society. His Government had also offered financial assistance for projects related to research on policies concerning the integration of women in the development process (resolution 14). It hoped that the Secretary-General of the United Nations would submit to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session the reports and proposals requested. His Government, like that of Australia, was considering the recommendations of the Conference and would make its position known when the proposals and reports in question were examined.

41. In connexion with resolution 4 (Role of the United Nations system in implementing the World Plan of Action), he thought that the Secretariat unit dealing with the implementation of the Plan of Action should be appropriately strengthened in accordance with operative paragraph 3 (b) of that resolution.

42. Mrs. SANTHOSO (Indonesia) said that the outcome of the Mexico Conference had come up to expectations

since, despite the diversity of their socio-economic and cultural conditions, the countries represented there had adopted a Declaration on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace and a World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year.

43. There was also cause for satisfaction in the action taken by the United Nations which, in the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation (E/5696, chap. IV) and at the nineteenth and twentieth sessions of the Governing Council of UNDP (see E/5646, E/5703), had stressed the importance of integrating women in development.

44. In Indonesia the principle of equality and full participation of women had never been contested and was indeed guaranteed by the Constitution. Like all developing countries, however, Indonesia had a number of problems, particularly in family planning, the protection of maternal and child health, education and training. Indonesia therefore approved in particular of resolution 15 of the Mexico Conference, on family planning and the full integration of women in development. The family planning programme, designed to improve the health of mother and child and to raise the level of living, had been accorded high priority in the Indonesian second five-year national development plan. The success of that programme would depend entirely on the participation of women. The results so far achieved were promising, owing to a certain extent to external assistance, in particular from the United Nations. Encouraging results had also been obtained with respect to the participation of women in development efforts, particularly in the fields of population, education, public health and rural development. On the last point, it was essential, as was stressed in resolution 21 of the Conference, that women in rural areas should be trained to enable them to participate productively in rural development activities. Operative paragraph 4 of that resolution, requesting international agencies to support such efforts, was particularly relevant.

45. In conclusion, she agreed with previous speakers that the participation of men in International Women's Year was of the utmost importance for its success.

46. Miss GUEVARA ACHAVAL (Argentina) stressed her country's interest in the question of the status of women; the integration of women in society should be a factor in the development of peoples and should not merely help to increase the labour force. The Mexico Conference would make it possible to put an end to the situation of injustice and discrimination which, as the Secretary-General had said, were an affront to human dignity. The Declaration, Plan of Action and 34 resolutions adopted showed clearly that women wished to play a real part in decision-making and the solution of present-day problems. In Argentina, women played a large part in the country's affairs and there were many women active in the political, legislative, legal, scientific, artistic and cultural spheres.

47. The Declaration of Mexico re-echoed the spirit of Council resolution 1851 (LVI) and General Assembly resolution 3010 (XXVII) concerning the integration of women in development. The Argentine delegation approved

of the Declaration, with the reservations already expressed concerning the eighth and eleventh preambular paragraphs and operative paragraphs 12, 24 and 26.

48. With regard to the World Plan of Action, her delegation had already expressed its opinion on section G of chapter II, concerning population: in its view, there was too often a tendency to see a panacea for all population problems in birth control, without drawing a distinction between over-population and under-population. It was for each Government to determine its own population policy and that principle, which was included in the World Population Plan of Action, should have been mentioned in the report of the Conference. With regard to chapter III, on research, data collection and analysis, her delegation had already stated that in order to produce a better analysis of national problems concerning the status of women and a better evaluation of the difficulties and progress made in regional integration there should be an exchange of experience through centres, universities and other institutions. In the light of that consideration, a centre for research, training, technical co-operation and information, financed by the Inter-American Commission of Women and the Organization of American States, was to be established in Argentina.

49. The Mexico Conference had concerned itself also with the participation of women in international life, as was shown by the resolutions concerning the participation of women in the seventh special session of the General Assembly and other international meetings and by the appeal to United Nations bodies concerning the situation of women in their employ. It was regrettable that the study undertaken by UNITAR in 1973 and the more recent reports submitted to the Council did not reveal much progress in that field.

50. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the World Conference of the International Women's Year had been a unique event, both because of the number of representatives attending the Conference and because of the broad range of questions considered. The report of the Conference therefore deserved thorough study.

51. The proclamation of International Women's Year had been welcomed with great interest in the Soviet Union and that vast international campaign had received the support of governmental and community bodies. Co-ordination of the action undertaken in the Soviet Union itself had been entrusted to a committee consisting of representatives of all the Republics, social bodies, the Supreme Soviet and the Ministries, which had prepared a broad programme of measures for 1975.

52. The Soviet Union approved of the achievements of the Conference as a whole, in particular the measures designed to improve the status of women and to extend their rights. The Conference had, indeed, borne witness to the capacity of women's movements to contribute to the strengthening of peace and security; moreover, it had not confined itself to the consideration of a few exclusively feminine problems and had not hesitated to tackle the international problems which had been the very source of

the drafting of the United Nations Charter. The celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the victory over fascism had taken place in the presence of many women who, particularly in the Soviet Union, had fought for the liberation of all the peoples of the world. Their determination to strengthen international peace and security was reflected in many of the Conference's resolutions.

53. Moreover, the Conference drew the attention of public opinion to certain problems which had yet to be solved: discrimination against women in various fields of social life and the fight against racism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism. In his statement at Mexico City, Mr. Podgorny, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, had stressed that socialism had liberated women and enabled them to participate in the life of society, the development of production and the administration of the State. The social policy of the Soviet Union was designed to create the best conditions to enable women to participate.

54. Although it was one of the major events of the International Women's Year, the Conference was only a beginning, for women's struggle was not over. The efforts must be continued, both within countries and at the international level and particularly in the context of the World Congress of International Women's Year, to be held at Berlin in October 1975.

55. His delegation was convinced that the International Women's Year would enable the women of all countries to achieve total liberation and to participate in the solution of problems, the strengthening of peace and security, the freeing of all peoples and the progress of mankind in general.

56 Mr. ŽIŽKA (Czechoslovakia) said that in Czechoslovakia, as in all the socialist countries, women had the same status as men, but that was not so in the rest of the world. For that reason, Czechoslovakia supported all efforts aimed at enabling women to participate on an equal footing

with men in the government of their countries and the building of world peace. It supported the Declaration of Mexico for it was convinced that the aims of the International Women's Year – equality, development and peace – corresponded to the real aspirations of women throughout the world. The proclamation of the International Women's Year had been one more step towards the equality of women and their participation in cultural, economic and social life.

57. It was also symbolic that 1975 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, in which women had played an active part in the fight against fascism. The present international *détente*, which had been started by the socialist countries, was characterized by a strengthening of co-operation between States belonging to different social and economic systems. *Détente* could have only beneficial effects on the status of women in all spheres and throughout the world. The participation of women in the struggle for peace, international security and disarmament and against racism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and *apartheid* could not but be welcomed, for that struggle was helping to strengthen *détente* and to encourage international co-operation and the economic and social development of all countries, on which, in turn, an improvement in the status of women depended.

58. Such an improvement would, however, be possible only after considerable social and economic changes and on the basis of a minimum level of development. A delegation of his Country had had the satisfaction of taking part in the Mexico Conference, which had constituted one of the essential initiatives in that direction. It welcomed the universal character and results of the Conference and would continue to support the action undertaken by women to improve their lot in all fields, which it considered to be a legitimate international obligation. It was convinced that the World Congress at Berlin and other large international meetings would proceed in the same direction.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*

## 1975th meeting

Friday, 25 July 1975, at 3.15 p.m.

*President:* Mr. I. A. AKHUND (Pakistan)

E/SR.1975

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Longestaey (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

### AGENDA ITEM 5

#### International Women's Year (*continued*) (E/5725)

1. Mr. MICHEEL (German Democratic Republic) said that the fact that 133 States, 8 liberation movements and 113 non-governmental organizations had taken part in the World Conference of the International Women's Year was evidence of the great interest which the Conference had

aroused throughout the world. His own country had made an active contribution to the preparations for the meeting.

2. From the time of its establishment, the German Democratic Republic had realized that the fundamental rights of man were also the rights of woman and that in modern society there was no question but that men and women should have equal rights. His country knew from experience, however, that the liberation of women was really possible only when all social relationships moved in the direction of social progress. That was why it greatly appreciated the energy with which the developing countries