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President: Mr. Milan KLUSÁK
(Czechoslovakia).

Present:

Representatives of the following States, members of the Council: Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, France, Gabon, Guatemala, India, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela.

Observers for the following Member States: Brazil, Cuba, Indonesia, Netherlands, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Yugoslavia.

Representatives of the following specialized agencies: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization.

AGENDA ITEM 20

Applications and reapplications of non-governmental organizations for consultative status (E/L.1159/Rev.1)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (E/4321)

1. Mr. WALDRON-RAMSEY (United Republic of Tanzania) proposed the deletion of the word "not" in operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution recommended by the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/4321, para. 40). The Economic and Social Council had hitherto admitted most professional organizations to consultative status without question and in no case had the Council failed to admit any organization as broadly based as the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. A similar organization, the International Commission of Jurists, which was a Western-oriented organization of lawyers in countries having a capitalist system of government and which had recently received, knowingly or not, contributions from the intelligence agency of a certain State, had been admitted to consultative status without difficulty. It would be a miscarriage of justice to deny that privilege to a group of lawyers from countries having a socialist system of government.

2. During the debate on the question in the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, his delegation had been disturbed that the arguments against the International Association of Democratic Lawyers had concerned, not its professional competence or its ability to assist the Council's work, but the fact that it followed the policies of the Eastern European countries. The history of the Committee showed that, because of their preponderance in the United Nations at one time, the Western countries had been able systematically to exclude from association with the Council some non-governmental organizations which had their headquarters in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and followed the socialist philosophy. However, during the last decade, great efforts had been made throughout the United Nations to rectify that imbalance and to ensure greater justice in United Nations operations. The principle of universality should be the main criterion for associating non-governmental organizations with the work of the United Nations. If, therefore, the Council admitted a Western group of lawyers to consultative status, it should also admit a socialist group of lawyers. It was erroneous to assert that the International Association of Democratic Lawyers was not sufficiently representative or represented a particular political philosophy; the Association, which drew its members from all countries, grouped together lawyers who sought to further the well-being of the legal profession by promoting the objectives and purposes of the United Nations. A rejection of its application could only mean a return to the most odious aspects of cold-war politics.

3. Although his delegation sometimes felt that some non-governmental organizations applying for admission to consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were more interested in promoting themselves than the objectives of the United Nations, it had, out of respect for the principle of universality, refrained from voting against them because it felt that the greater the number of non-governmental organizations associated with the United Nations, the more publicity would be given to its work. It had also felt that, despite previous practice, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations should report to the Council in a series of recommendations rather than in a draft resolution.

4. Out of respect for the principle of universality and in a spirit of fair play and justice, the Council should admit the International Association of Democratic Lawyers to consultative status on its third application.

5. Sir Edward WARNER (United Kingdom) said that his delegation could not support operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations because it felt that the International Council for Building, Research Studies and Documentation, which was concerned with a specific aspect of the Council's work, should not be re-

classified from category B to category A, which was reserved for organizations broadly interested in most of the Council's activities.

6. His delegation could not support the Tanzanian oral amendment or operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution because it felt that a non-governmental organization should not act as a Government's mouth-piece, merely echoing its views.

7. Mr. NASINOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the Tanzanian representative's observations on the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. The admission of that Association should be considered as part of the wider complex of questions relating to the non-governmental organizations and their role in the work of the United Nations as a whole. As annex III in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations showed, there were now 190 such organizations, an inexplicable drop of almost 200 from the previous year. The overwhelming majority of the organizations listed—possibly as many as 95 per cent—were Western in composition and had their headquarters in Western countries. That one-sided situation was becoming even worse since, as a result of the opposition of the Western countries, little was being done to make the non-governmental organizations more representative.

8. The International Association of Democratic Lawyers was a broadly based international organization which had branches in forty-four countries, including the United States; it put forward its own views on important legal problems, supported the United Nations and its principles, and could only assist the Council in its work. If the Association was refused the consultative status enjoyed by the International Commission of Jurists, a one-sided organization subsidized by an intelligence agency which unjustifiably attacked some countries, including his own, the Council would hear the views only of a very narrow group representative neither of the world nor of the professional views held in other countries.

9. He himself knew from his own experience how the Association worked, how effectively it disseminated the ideas and principles on which the United Nations was based, and how it supported United Nations action in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and in advancing the cause of human rights. The Association was a democratic one fully capable of making an effective contribution to the work of the United Nations. He therefore supported the amendment of the United Republic of Tanzania.

10. Mr. VARELA (Panama) expressed his appreciation for the moderation of the statement of the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, which differed so sharply from his statement in the Committee in support of the application of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. While he agreed that the United Nations had been established to further a dialogue between all countries of the world, whatever ideology they followed, he had voted in the Committee against the granting of category B consultative status to the Association because he had received unsatisfactory replies to a series of questions he had put to its representative and because, although it was clearly an association of socialist lawyers, it calls itself an

association of democratic lawyers. Since nothing had changed since the Committee's debate to change his view, he would vote against the admission of the Association in the Council.

11. Mr. FORSHELL (Sweden) said that the request for reclassification of the International Council for Building Research, Studies and Documentation placed his delegation in a difficult position. The International Council did excellent work and had fully earned its international recognition. But Council resolution 288 B (X), paragraph 16, required the Economic and Social Council to distinguish between organizations which had "a basic interest in most of the activities of the Council" (category A) and those which had "a special competence in, and are concerned specifically with, only a few of the fields of activity covered by the Council" (category B). The distinction between categories A and B was, therefore, purely quantitative, and it was difficult to see how the International Council could be reclassified to category A status as defined under the resolution. That illustrated the need for some revision of the criteria to be used by the Council in establishing consultative relations.

12. He proposed that a decision on the request of the International Council should be deferred until the following year, when the whole situation would have been reviewed and the Council might have before it specific proposals regarding changes in the categories of non-governmental organizations.

13. While there were strong arguments in favour of granting the reapplication of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, there were also reasons for hesitation. A review of the whole situation might shed light on that request, too, and his delegation would therefore abstain on that item, as it had in the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

14. Mr. JURZA (Czechoslovakia) said that there had recently been a change for the better in the work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. Its more objective attitude to non-governmental organizations was doubtless due to its enlarged membership, which made possible wider and more equitable representation.

15. His delegation welcomed the Committee's decision to recommend that the Council should grant the request of the Women's International Democratic Federation for category B consultative status. The Federation was a well-established and widely recognized international organization representing 200 million women from seventy-six countries, regardless of race, nationality, religious or political views; it was, in fact, the largest women's organization in the world. It was concerned with all the problems of women falling within the competence of the Economic and Social Council, and specifically of the Commission on the Status of Women; it undertook a broad range of activities to advance the status of women and children and to promote peace, democracy and national independence. Its aims and purposes were in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations. It collaborated with a number of the specialized agencies, took great interest in the work of the United Nations and wished to make its full contribution to the Organization's ef-

forts to improve the status of women. It therefore fully met the standards for consultative status B established by the Council, and the proposal in that respect should be approved.

16. His delegation was dissatisfied with the Committee's recommendation with regard to the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, for it could not be considered objective or proper. The Association was an important international non-governmental organization of recognized standing and one of the largest lawyers' associations, comprising more than 25,000 members in many countries with different political and economic systems. Its aims and purposes were in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and concerned the promotion of democratic rights and liberties, the independence of all peoples and peace and international co-operation. Since 1965, it had enjoyed status C with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and also co-operated with the United Nations and various lawyers' organizations. In January 1967, the Association had celebrated its twentieth anniversary on the premises of UNESCO in Paris, and many distinguished statesmen and jurists had taken part in the proceedings. The Association enjoyed world-wide authority.

17. His delegation therefore appealed to those who had opposed the granting of consultative status to reconsider their attitude. A positive decision by the Council would be a step towards normalizing the present situation in which the list of non-governmental organizations with consultative status was totally unbalanced as far as the representation of different views, and indirectly of different areas, was concerned.

18. Mr. UY (Philippines) said that, according to resolution 288 B (X), the main reason for the establishment of consultative arrangements with non-governmental organizations was to give the Council direct access to the people whose lives were influenced by its activities. Economic and social progress, the Council's primary concern, transcended political considerations. In admitting a non-governmental organization to consultative status with the Council, therefore, the only three prerequisites were that it should be concerned with matters falling within the competence of the Economic and Social Council, that it should undertake to support the work of the United Nations, and that it should not be a government body. So long as it satisfied those three prerequisites, its ideology did not matter. In fact, the more widely the list of non-governmental organizations represented the ideologies in the world, the better it would be for the purposes of the Council, because such a situation would be a more faithful reflection of the concerns of the peoples of Member States.

19. His delegation supported as a whole the draft resolution submitted to the Council by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/4321, para. 40). It supported the reapplication of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers which, having pledged that it would act in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and support the work of the United Nations, satisfied the prerequisites for admission to consultative status. On the other hand, his delegation opposed the application for reclassifi-

cation to category A of the International Council for Building Research, Studies and Documentation, which satisfied the criteria for inclusion in category B only, as set forth in paragraph 16 (b) of resolution 288 B (X).

20. Mr. CONSTANTIN (Romania) said that the Council was called upon to rectify the injustice done to the International Association of Democratic Lawyers by readmitting it to category B consultative status. The International Association was one of the largest lawyers' organizations in the world, and over the past twenty years had won outstanding merit in promoting the principles of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. Its universality was demonstrated by the range of its activities and by its membership, which was drawn from countries with different economic and social systems. It was in the interests of the United Nations that it should be able to consult organizations representing all points of view. His delegation would accordingly vote for the Tanzanian amendment to paragraph 7 of the draft resolution submitted by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/4321, para. 40).

21. He welcomed the Committee's decision to recommend that the Council should grant the reapplication of the Women's International Democratic Federation for category B consultative status. With a membership of over 200 million drawn from countries in every continent irrespective of race, nationality, religion or political views, the Federation was well equipped to promote human rights and champion equality for women throughout the world. By granting the reapplication, the Council would be taking another step towards fulfilling the principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all embodied in the Charter.

22. Mr. COX (Sierra Leone) said that it was not for the Economic and Social Council to question the political persuasions of non-governmental organizations. The list in annex III to document E/4321 should reflect the widest possible range of ideologies, thus giving the Council the advantages of diversity. Only ideological tolerance could save the world from disaster. As a non-aligned country, Sierra Leone would support the Tanzanian amendment to paragraph 7 of the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

23. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said that as far as the Tanzanian amendment to paragraph 7 of the draft resolution was concerned, his delegation would have to maintain the vote it had cast in the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. Its opposition—which included paragraph 6, on which he would like a separate vote—was not rooted in the fact that those non-governmental organizations reflected the political concepts of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. His delegation recognized that the list of non-governmental organizations should not reflect only one point of view. For instance, his delegation had voted for the granting of category A consultative status to the World Federation of Trade Unions. There was therefore no question of excluding an organization just because it represented the views of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. The opposition of his delegation to the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and the Women's International Democratic Federation was based on the fact that they had

frequently acted in disregard of the spirit and objectives of the United Nations. The USSR representative had noted that many of the non-governmental organizations in consultative status had their headquarters in Western countries. But that was not the result of a deliberate attempt to include only those organizations that were inspired by Western concepts; it was simply because there were many more non-governmental organizations in the Western world, where the formation of such groups was traditional.

24. With regard to the request of the International Council for Building Research, Studies and Documentation, he welcomed the Swedish representative's suggestion that a decision should be deferred. The International Council, which had made a remarkable contribution to various organs of the Council in its special field, fully satisfied the criteria for inclusion in category B as laid down in Council resolution 288 B (X); to reclassify it would dilute the meaning of category A, which was intended for organizations which had a basic interest "in most of the activities of the Council". It might also tend to dilute the important work which the International Council was doing in the one field in which it was outstandingly competent. It was therefore preferable to defer action on the request until the Council had clarified the criteria to be used in distinguishing between categories A and B.

25. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) noted that most of the reasons advanced in the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for rejecting applications had been political in nature. It had also been suggested that certain organizations were not entirely non-governmental. But the Council had yet to establish clear and objective criteria by which the applications of non-governmental organizations should be accepted or rejected. It was obvious that many of the organizations already admitted to consultative status could not claim to be non-political or completely unaffiliated with Governments. It was therefore unfortunate that some delegations should emphasize political affiliation as the chief reason for rejecting the applications of certain organizations. Those criteria had not been systematically applied in the past, and they should not be applied at all until the Council established some objective basis on which to assess applications.

26. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) proposed that, to take account of the views expressed by the Swedish representative, operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution submitted by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations should be amended to read: "Decides to defer for one year consideration of the request of the International Council for Building Research, Studies and Documentation for reclassification from category B to category A consultative status".

27. Mr. JHA (India) proposed that the words "World Muslim Congress" should be deleted from operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution and inserted in operative paragraph 1, after the words "International Christian Union of Business Executives". In his delegation's view, the World Muslim Congress was a political organization without even the thinnest veil of cultural activity. It was extremely reactionary, in the fullest sense of that term, and represented a threat not only to peace and progress in general, but also to

the peace of a particular region. Applications for consultative status had been opposed in the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations because organizations had been considered to have a narrow political spectrum; that phrase fully applied to the World Muslim Congress, to say nothing of its religious bigotry and fanaticism, the dubious way in which it was financed and the unsavoury antecedents of its leaders.

28. The organization's avowed objective was to convey the feelings of Muslim leaders to the world; but surely Governments could hardly acquiesce to having their functions thus usurped. Moreover, the list of its officials gave the impression of an inter-governmental rather than a non-governmental organization. It also claimed to be removing prejudice among the Muslims of the world—an aim which was hardly in line with the task of promoting economic and social progress. His own doubts about the organization had already been expressed by others at the Council Committee's meetings. He noted that the representative of the World Muslim Congress who had addressed the Committee had been a permanent member of the delegation of a State Member of the United Nations.

29. Political affiliations were not mentioned in operative paragraph 2 of Economic and Social Council resolution 288 B (X), which listed the fields with which non-governmental organizations in consultative status should be concerned. While many non-governmental organizations were politically conscious, none would surely claim, as the organization in question did, that they had a right to be politically active. Operative paragraph 3 of the same resolution indicated that the aims and purposes of non-governmental organizations in consultative status should be in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations; taking sides in unfortunate quarrels between neighbours, however, could not be considered as fulfilling that criterion.

30. The Council could therefore not grant consultative status to an organization which ignored the principles of the Charter. He himself regretted that no organization representing the Muslim world at present enjoyed consultative status with the Council. He would be happy to support the application of almost any other Muslim organization.

31. Mr. HUDA (Pakistan) said he regretted that the Indian representative had seen fit to re-open a discussion which had been concluded in the Committee, particularly since he had done so in such strong language and for political reasons. The World Muslim Congress was not a purely political organization and had as its main objective the promotion of the cultural activities of all Muslims.

32. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) said it was unfortunate that political reasons were again being invoked with reference to an application for consultative status, since the Council had no objective criteria on which it could judge such applications. It could not take action on particular cases without first ensuring that the criteria now being applied could be met by those organizations already enjoying consultative status. In that connexion, he felt that the thorough review suggested by the representative of the United Republic

of Tanzania in his draft resolution (E/L.1159/Rev.1) would be most timely.

33. Mr. JURZA (Czechoslovakia) said his delegation had abstained from voting on the application of the World Muslim Congress in the Committee since it felt it needed more information about the activities of that organization. In view of the apparent controversy over the organization, however, it might be best to defer consideration of the application for one year, as the Indian representative had suggested.

34. Mr. HUDA (Pakistan) said that if applications were to be deferred merely because they were controversial, a very serious precedent would be established.

35. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to vote on the Tanzanian amendment to delete the word "not" from operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (E/4321, para. 40).

At the request of the representative of the Soviet Union, the vote was taken by roll-call.

Czechoslovakia, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Czechoslovakia, India, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Sierra Leone, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania.

Against: France, Guatemala, Panama, Peru, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Belgium, Canada.

Abstaining: Dahomey, Gabon, Iran, Sweden, Turkey, Cameroon.

The amendment was adopted by 12 votes to 9, with 6 abstentions.

36. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to vote on the United States amendment to replace the words "to grant" in operative paragraph 2 by the words "to defer for one year consideration of".

The amendment was adopted by 13 votes to 7, with 7 abstentions.

37. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to vote on the Indian amendment to transfer the words "World Muslim Congress" from operative paragraph 4 to operative paragraph 1.

At the request of the Indian representative, the vote was taken by roll-call.

Mexico, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Czechoslovakia, India.

Against: Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Turkey, Venezuela, Cameroon, Guatemala, Iran, Kuwait, Libya.

Abstaining: Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Belgium, Canada, Dahomey, France, Gabon.

The amendment was rejected by 14 votes to 4, with 9 abstentions.

38. Sir Edward WARNER (United Kingdom) requested a separate vote on operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution.

At the request of the Soviet Union representative, the vote was taken by roll-call.

India, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: India, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania, Czechoslovakia.

Against: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Belgium, Canada.

Abstaining: Panama, Venezuela, Cameroon, Dahomey, France, Gabon, Guatemala.

Operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution was adopted by 16 votes to 4, with 7 abstentions.

The draft resolution as a whole, as amended, was adopted by 25 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

39. Mr. ATTIGA (Libya) said that his delegation had voted impartially in the belief that no political considerations should govern acceptance or rejection of applications for consultative status.

40. Mr. COX (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation had refused to take account of political considerations in voting on the draft resolution. In his view, tolerance should be exercised so that widely divergent views could be represented in the search for solutions to the problems facing the Council.

41. Mr. CHAMFOR (Cameroon) said that his delegation had voted consistently in the past against the applications of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and the Women's International Democratic Federation because it felt that non-governmental organizations in consultative status must not only agree to adhere to the principles of the Charter, but also to do so in practice. It had abstained from voting on the paragraphs relating to those organizations, since it seemed that the two organizations intended to bring their practices more into line with the principles of the Charter.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.