



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Monday, 7 March 1966,
at 11.5 a.m.

Fortieth Session
OFFICIAL RECORDS

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Tewfik BOUATTOURA (Algeria).

Present:

Representatives of the following States: Algeria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Greece, India, Iran, Iraq, Luxembourg, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Sierra Leone, Sweden, 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: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mauritania, Mexico, Nigeria, Poland, Senegal, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, United Arab Republic.

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

Representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization; International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Travel, transport and communications:

- (a) *International travel and tourism;*
- (b) *Transport of dangerous goods*

RÉPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/4163 AND ADD.1)

1. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take a decision on the three draft resolutions recommended

by the Economic Committee, which were to be found in annexes A, B and C to the Committee's report (E/4163).

2. At the request of the United Kingdom representative, he put to the vote the draft resolution on International Tourism Year, which appeared in annex A.

The draft resolution in annex A to document E/4163 was adopted by 22 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

3. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should adopt without a vote the two draft resolutions set forth in annexes B and C to the Committee's report.

The draft resolutions in annexes B and C to document E/4163 were adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 7

Development of natural resources (concluded)*:

- (a) *Co-ordinated action in the field of water resources;*
- (b) *Non-agricultural resources;*
- (c) *Water desalination in developing countries*

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (E/4164 AND CORR.1 AND ADD.1 AND 2)

4. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should adopt without a vote the four draft resolutions set forth in annexes A, B, C and D to the Economic Committee's report (E/4164 and Corr.1).

The draft resolutions in annexes A, B, C and D to documents E/4164 and Corr.1 were adopted.

5. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that his delegation had given its approval to the draft resolutions set forth in annex C to the Economic Committee's report even though several resolutions for which France had not voted were enumerated in the second pre-ambular paragraph; however, his country had not changed its attitude and would have abstained on the first part of that paragraph if a separate vote had been taken on it.

6. With regard to the five-year programme, France considered that it should comprise the approval of projects rather than of surveys. If the stress was laid on the execution of specific projects it would be easier to find the necessary funds. Those funds should under no circumstances come out of the regular budgets, which were intended to cover administrative expenses only.

7. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had approved the draft resolutions on the understanding that the necessary additional resources could be found from existing budgetary appropriations.

*Resumed from the 1409th meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 14^c

Elections (continued)** (E/L.1113/Add.1, E/L.1113/Rev.1, E/L.1116)

8. Mr. VAKIL (Iran) introduced draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1 on behalf of the sponsors. The need to enlarge the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council had been felt for several years past. The Council had already increased the membership of certain commissions from eighteen to twenty-one, and that of others from fifteen to eighteen, before the Council itself had been expanded. Views seemed to be unanimous in principle, but the distribution of the additional seats raised some problems. Twenty-seven had originally seemed to the Afro-Asian group to be the most practical number, being that fixed by the General Assembly for the membership of the Economic and Social Council. After consultations, however, the Afro-Asian group had accepted the figure twenty-four for the Statistical Commission. It had also accepted the figure twenty-four for the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The number chosen for all the other commissions was twenty-seven. In the expansion of the Statistical Commission the sponsors of the draft resolution proposed that of the six additional seats, three seats should be allotted to Africa, one to Latin America, one to Asia and one to Eastern Europe. However, that distribution should not constitute a precedent since the socialist countries of Eastern Europe would thus have one seat more than their strict share.

9. Mr. RANKIN (Canada) said that his delegation, a co-sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1, considered that the United Nations should represent all points of view and should include as many countries as possible. The same applied to all its organs, and in particular to the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary organs, which should take into account the increased membership of the Organization. The consequent increase in the membership of the Council should be applied to the functional commissions as well, for it would make their work easier.

10. Mr. KLUSAK (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation favoured the enlargement of the Council's functional commissions; the increase in the membership of the United Nations and of the Council had made such enlargement essential. His delegation therefore supported the principle underlying draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1. However, as a member of a group of countries which had suffered from inadequate representation on various United Nations organs in the past, Czechoslovakia could not accept operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, which gave three seats to the socialist States of Eastern Europe; that was unjust in view of the active role which those countries had always played in the functional commissions. The consultations which had taken place so far had not succeeded in meeting the wishes of the socialist States of Eastern Europe, largely because the figure twenty-seven made the problem difficult to solve. That figure was not sacrosanct.

11. On behalf of his own delegation and those of Romania and the USSR, his delegation submitted two

amendments (E/L.1116) to draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1, which would replace the words "twenty-seven members" in operative paragraph 1 by the words "twenty-eight members" and the words "three members" in sub-paragraph (e) of that paragraph by the words "four members". The constructive work done by the socialist States of Eastern Europe would thus be acknowledged, without any damage to the interests of other groups of Powers. His delegation did not think its proposal would present any difficulty, for there were no binding legal or other rules to be found on the subject anywhere. His delegation had no objections to the rest of the draft resolution and was prepared to support it.

12. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that in principle he was in favour of enlarging the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. In view of their essentially technical nature he would have preferred to keep their membership down to fewer than twenty-seven, and he was glad that course had been taken in the case of the Statistical Commission. He would like the same to apply to the Population Commission, which now had eighteen members, and in that connexion he asked once again whether that Commission could not be dealt with in operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1 instead of operative paragraph 1. Nevertheless, if the Council had unanimously favoured a membership of twenty-seven for most of the functional commissions and a membership of twenty-four for one or two of them, his delegation would probably have voted in favour of the draft resolution. Since opinion in the Council seemed to be far from unanimous, his delegation had felt justified in making some reservations.

13. His Government regarded twenty-seven as a maximum figure, for it was the custom that the Council's subsidiary organs should not have more members than the Council itself. Indeed, that had never happened, except during the brief transitional period immediately preceding the enlargement of the Council, and that had merely been in anticipation of what was to come. His country's attitude was not directed against any country or group of countries, or against those who wanted the number twenty-seven changed to twenty-eight. The distribution of seats was undoubtedly a problem, but his delegation wondered whether the Council was competent to solve it, since its own membership had been fixed by the General Assembly. The figure twenty-seven which had been arrived at for the membership of the Council was the result of a compromise which should not be challenged now, particularly since the Council's work at the current session—the first since its enlargement—had proved very satisfactory. His delegation had made some reservations on draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1 but was prepared to support it. It represented, in his delegation's view, a middle course which could gain wide support in the Council, and it would be a mistake to allow the very basis of the proposal to be called into question.

14. Mr. MURGESCU (Romania) endorsed the arguments put forward by the Czechoslovak representative and expressed the hope that the amendments which that representative had introduced, and of which the Romanian delegation was a co-sponsor, would

**Resumed from the 1410th meeting.

be accepted by the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1. Those amendments were in keeping with the idea expressed by the Iranian representative, namely that the membership of the Council's functional commissions should provide balanced representation for the various countries and groups of countries.

15. Mr. FORSHELL (Sweden) said that his country had always been aware of the value of the Council's functional commissions, whose small size and high competence had enabled them to achieve useful results. His country too believed that the increase in the membership of the United Nations should be proportionately reflected in all its organs, particularly the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. There were two ways to set about achieving that: either by redistributing the seats, or by enlarging the functional commissions to make room for the new countries. The first method entailed the risk that countries that had played a very useful role in the commissions would not be re-elected; the second, that the enlargement would be offset by a loss of efficiency. The second solution nevertheless seemed preferable, and the most generally acceptable number of members appeared to be twenty-seven. It had the advantage of being the same as the membership of the Council, and the distribution of seats could therefore be modelled on that of the Council. For that reason, Sweden was a co-sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1. In its opinion, the number twenty-seven should not be exceeded. It would be regrettable if, scarcely two months after the enlargement of its own membership, the Council should start calling for its functional commissions to be enlarged further; that might well bring about fresh increases which were bound to impair efficiency. His delegation opposed the amendments submitted by the Czechoslovak representative.

16. Mr. WHYTE (United Kingdom) stressed the expert character of the functional commissions. The expertise varied in character and degree from one commission to another, but was nevertheless essential to their effective functioning. Consequently their members were appointed on the basis of their qualifications and skills. The United Kingdom had welcomed the enlargement of the Economic and Social Council and was willing to see similar action taken for the functional commissions, despite the risk that some efficiency might be lost and that the commissions so enlarged might be difficult to manipulate. However, in view of the qualifications required as a primary condition for membership, the composition of the commissions should not be based on a geographical distribution that bore no relation to the distribution of the required expertise.

17. Mr. PITHER (Gabon), speaking as a sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1, opposed the amendments submitted by the Czechoslovak representative. His delegation considered that the membership of the Council's commissions should not exceed twenty-seven unless the General Assembly decided otherwise.

18. Mr. ZOLLNER (Dahomey) said that his delegation, which was a sponsor of the draft resolution, welcomed the unanimous approval secured in principle for the enlargement of the Council's functional com-

missions. Dahomey had originally been in favour of setting the membership of all the commissions at twenty-seven, which had seemed the most practical number in view of the precedent set by the Economic and Social Council. His country had agreed, in a spirit of compromise, that the Statistical Commission should have only twenty-four members. Since the submission of the draft resolution, that compromise seemed to have been called into question. In the circumstances, while Dahomey would have been prepared to support the original draft resolution, he did not consider it unreasonable to request that the membership of the commissions should be increased to twenty-eight. The fact that that figure was higher than the membership of the Council should be no obstacle, since at one time, even though only briefly, the Council's functional commissions had already had a larger membership than the Council. His delegation would therefore support the amendments submitted by the Czechoslovak representative.

19. Mr. WALDRON-RAMSEY (United Republic of Tanzania) examined the objections raised by certain delegations, in particular those of France, the United Kingdom and Sweden, to the Czechoslovak representative's proposal that the membership of the subsidiary organs of the Council should be increased to twenty-eight and the number of seats allotted to the socialist countries to four. The United Kingdom representative had said that, if the membership of those organs became too large, they would be difficult to "manipulate". The use of that word was revealing; it reflected the state of mind of certain delegations, which thought they had a right to "manipulate" the others.

20. At the eighteenth session of the General Assembly, owing to a political situation familiar to all, the USSR and the other East European countries had been unable to participate in the negotiations leading up to the adoption on 17 December 1963, of resolution 1990 (XVIII), on the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly, and resolution 1991 (XVIII), which had instituted a more equitable representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Those countries had asked previously for better representation on certain United Nations bodies, including the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, and it was probable that if they had participated in drafting those resolutions the Council would now have more than twenty-seven members and the countries in question a larger number of seats.

21. The Soviet Union delegation and the other East European delegations had firmly supported the Afro-Asian countries when they had asked for more equitable representation; it was therefore only fair that the socialist countries of Eastern Europe should be treated with the same equity today.

22. Certain delegations had claimed that the functional commissions could not have more members than the Council and that the General Assembly, in deciding to enlarge the Council to twenty-seven members, had chosen the most appropriate system of representation. The representative of Dahomey had refuted that argument; there was nothing to prevent the membership of the commissions from being increased to

twenty-eight, and no need to consult the General Assembly for that purpose. Moreover the Assembly would probably approve such a change, which should ensure a better balance between groups of countries.

23. At the General Assembly's eighteenth session, Tanzania had requested that the membership of the Council should be increased not to twenty-seven, but to thirty-six or thirty-seven. Since the Council had originally had eighteen members, out of the General Assembly's fifty-one, it would be only fair to double that number now that the Assembly's membership was 117. Although that suggestion had been rejected at the time, it was perfectly feasible to go beyond twenty-seven. The African countries, for their part, would be justified in requesting more than seven seats on the Council in one, two or three years' time, when the countries not yet independent became so.

24. The delegations of France, the United Kingdom and Sweden had alleged that because of the highly specialized nature of certain commissions, they might lose much of their efficiency if they were over-enlarged; the United Kingdom representative had added that, since some countries had more knowledge and more experts than others, it was difficult to adhere to a strict geographical distribution in those commissions. In his opinion those arguments had been advanced all too often against the interests of the developing countries. They had been heard just recently in the UNCTAD Committee on Shipping and Committee on Invisibles and Financing related to Trade. The work of the Council's subsidiary organs was not highly technical, and it was inadmissible that the countries of Africa, Asia or Latin America should play only a secondary role and be lectured by other delegations on such subjects as narcotics, the status of women, and social questions. Like the representative of Dahomey, he was surprised at the specific request that the membership of the Statistical Commission and of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should be limited to twenty-four.

25. He therefore supported the amendments submitted by the Czechoslovak delegation; it was equitable that the socialist countries of Eastern Europe should have four seats in the Council's subsidiary organs, just as it would be equitable to increase the number of seats allotted to the African countries when their continent became wholly free.

26. Mr. SIDI BABA (Morocco), speaking as a sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1113/Rev.1, began by thanking the representative of Iran for his very able introduction of the proposal.

27. The Council should bear in mind that the socialist countries of Eastern Europe had always sought increased representation for developing countries in the Council, and it seemed to him only right that the socialist countries, in their turn, should ask to be treated with similar fairness. He therefore supported the amendments submitted by the delegations of Czechoslovakia, Romania and the USSR.

28. However, it was important that the Council should aim at unanimity, or at least a broad measure of agreement, in taking a decision concerning representation on subsidiary organs. The General Assembly had had the same concern in adopting resolutions 1990

(XVIII) and 1991 (XVIII) in 1963. It would be regrettable if the draft resolution before the Council should lead to confrontations between the various groups, and to differences of opinion between developing countries; it would also be regrettable if, on being put to the vote, the draft resolution and the amendments submitted by Czechoslovakia, Romania and the USSR were rejected, or adopted by a majority too small for the Council's decision to have any real force.

29. Consequently he considered that the vote on a draft resolution to increase the membership of the subsidiary organs of the Council should be deferred to the next session; fresh consultations could then take place between the groups, and it might be possible to reach a general agreement.

30. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the question of expanding the membership of the economic and social organs of the United Nations was not new; it arose out of the considerable expansion in membership of the Organization itself, which, since its establishment, had admitted to membership more than fifty Asian and African countries that had attained independence, while the number of socialist States Members of the United Nations had doubled. The expansion of the membership of the functional commissions of the Council must therefore take account of that general development and not merely of the changes which had taken place since the Council's thirty-second session.

31. The delegations of the socialist countries, faithful to the principle of equitable geographical distribution of seats, had consistently supported the claims of the African and Asian countries for wider representation in the Council and its subsidiary organs. Furthermore, the USSR had been the first State to ratify the amendment to the Charter designed to give the African and Asian countries better representation in the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

32. There was nothing surprising about the position taken by the socialist countries' delegations regarding the membership of subsidiary organs of the Council, for those countries had long considered themselves inadequately represented in the Council and its organs; that was borne out by the letter which the USSR Mission to the United Nations had addressed on 5 September 1963, before the eighteenth session of the General Assembly, to the Chairman of the Subcommittee of the Committee on arrangements for a conference for the purpose of reviewing the Charter.^{1/} Unfortunately, as the Tanzanian representative had wisely pointed out, the socialist countries, for reasons which were common knowledge, had not taken part in the discussions at the General Assembly's eighteenth session on the distribution of seats in the Council, and that was doubtless why they had not been given additional seats by Assembly resolution 1991 B (XVIII), which had increased the membership of the Council to twenty-seven. The comments made by the Soviet delegation, both at the eighteenth session of the General Assembly^{2/} and at the resumed thirty-sixth

^{1/} See A/AC.81/SC.1/4/Add.11.

^{2/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Eighteenth Session, Plenary Meetings, 1285th meeting.

session of the Council (1312th meeting), on the increase in membership of the Council's sessional committees, had met with resistance from the delegations of Western countries and the problem had remained unsolved. It should therefore surprise no one that the socialist countries maintained their position, particularly at a time when the membership of the Council had just been increased.

33. In the circumstances his delegation could not accept the draft resolution (E/L.1113/Rev.1) which, in its present form, was designed to perpetuate an unfair situation. The amendments submitted by the Czechoslovak representative (E/L.1116) had been informally communicated to members of the Council during the negotiations leading up to the submission of the draft resolution, and had met with objections only from the delegations of Western countries. Contrary to the arguments put forward by those delegations, General Assembly resolution 1991 B (XVIII) had been designed not merely to increase the number of representatives of certain groups, but to institute a more equitable geographical distribution of seats in the Council. Moreover, there was no reason to tie the composition of the functional commissions to that of the Council itself, for the Council had sole competence to determine the number and composition of its own subsidiary organs; indeed, the membership of certain functional commissions had exceeded that of the Council for some years now. Lastly, it could

not be argued that the efficiency of the functional commissions might be impaired by the addition of one to the membership figure proposed in the draft resolution; furthermore, the number twenty-eight was acceptable to the majority of members of the Council.

34. In his view, therefore, it must be frankly recognized that the delegations of the Western group were taking refuge in those arguments merely in order to defend their own interests. However, a question of principle was involved: the issue was whether the Council should continue to allow its decisions to be dictated by a few delegations or whether it wished to show fairness to all groups by redressing an anomaly. The Soviet delegation, for its part, would continue to strive for a just solution.

35. In conclusion, he wished to thank the representative of Morocco, who had acknowledged the constant support of the socialist countries for the claims of the developing countries. However, that support should be acknowledged by fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of the socialist countries: in other words, by finding a way to grant the group of socialist countries of Eastern Europe fitting representation in the organs of the Council. He had no doubt that the Council, in examining that problem would take the position of those countries into account.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.