



# ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Forty-sixth Session  
OFFICIAL RECORDS

Tuesday, 27 May 1969,  
at 3.30 p.m.



NEW YORK

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**President: Mr. Raymond SCHEYVEN (Belgium).**

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Maramis (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

### AGENDA ITEM 18

Work programme of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields (E/4612 and Corr.1-6, E/4612 (Annex), E/4612 (Annex) Add.1, E/4612 (Summary), E/4612/Add.1, E/4612/Add.2 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.3 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.4 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.5 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.6-8, E/4642, E/4670 and Corr.1)

1. The PRESIDENT noted that the Council had before it two reports: the report of the Secretary-General on the work programme of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields and its budgetary requirements (E/4612 and Corr.1-6, E/4612 (Annex), E/4612 (Annex) Add.1, E/4612 (Summary), E/4612/Add.1, E/4612/Add.2 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.3 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.4 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.5 and Corr.1, E/4612/Add.6-8) and the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the first part of its third session (E/4670 and Corr.1). The Council also had before it a note by the Secretary-General on the financial implications of the recommendations of the commissions and committees of the Council (E/4642).

2. Mr. DANIELI (United Republic of Tanzania) suggested that it might be appropriate for the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs to provide a preface to the Council's debate by commenting on some highlights of the reports.

3. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that it was not easy to summarize the debates in the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, which had been highly technical and had covered the activities of many divisions of the Secretariat. Nor could he attempt to summarize the voluminous report of the Secretary-General, but he pointed out that a written summary (E/4612 (Summary)) was available. If there were any particular points in the reports on which members of the Council would like to have additional information, he would be happy to provide it.

4. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said that, in considering the reports, the Council might wish to take up only those items of the work programme

which had been thoroughly discussed in its subordinate commissions and committees. Items which remained on the list of unfinished business in the subordinate bodies might be referred back to them. For example, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination indicated in its report (E/4670, para. 9) that it had been unable to review the work programmes relating to a number of extremely important activities, and he questioned whether the Council should take them up before the Committee had completed its consideration of them.

5. Mr. DANIELI (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the Council's traditional procedure had been to leave the discussion in depth of the work of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to its Co-ordinating Committee at the summer session. It would be advisable to leave the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination more time to complete its reports.

6. The PRESIDENT asked whether the Council was in favour of simply taking note of the report (E/4670 and Corr.1) and requesting the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to continue its work, which would then be discussed further at the summer session.

7. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) stressed that he was not suggesting that all discussion of the work of the Committee should be deferred. There might be some items which the Council could discuss at the current session, thus saving precious time. It was, perhaps, particularly important to provide some guidance to the Committee regarding priorities, which should certainly be the responsibility of the Council, and not of a subsidiary organ.

8. Mr. VIAUD (France) noted that the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination had a dual task: first, to review the United Nations work programme in the economic, social and human rights fields, making recommendations to the Economic and Social Council concerning the organization of that programme and, where appropriate, concerning programme priorities, and, secondly, to deal with co-ordination of the activities of the specialized agencies and those of the United Nations. The Committee would be dealing with co-ordination at the second part of its third session, in June.

9. The problem was what action to take on the report on the first part of the Committee's third session. In 1968, the Council had simply referred the report on the first part of the second session of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. If it decided to follow the same procedure at its current session, it should make it clear, in so doing, that it had not discussed the report or made any judgement on its contents.

10. Alternatively, the Council could defer consideration of the report of the Committee until its forty-seventh session, when the reports on both parts of the third session would be available. Since there was a definite relationship between the problems of co-ordination within the United Nations and the problem of co-ordinating the activities of the United Nations and those of the specialized agencies, that course would have certain advantages, and his delegation favoured it, on the understanding that delegations participating in the joint meeting of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination would be allowed to comment on the report.

11. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he favoured the suggestion that the Council should take note of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the first part of its third session (E/4670 and Corr.1) and postpone further discussion until the reports on both parts were available, at the next session of the Council.

12. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) said that he had no immediate comment to make on a somewhat technical document (E/4670 and Corr.1). However, he was not in favour of simply taking note of the report and closing the debate before it had even begun. He hoped that the matter would be left open, so that any delegations wishing to do so could raise specific points within the next few days.

13. Mr. SKATARETIKO (Yugoslavia) agreed with the representative of the Upper Volta that the item should be left open for further discussion and should not be disposed of at the current meeting. Although the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination had not completed all its work, he felt that it would be helpful to make some observations on the report already before the Council.

14. Appreciation was due to the members of the Committee for their dedicated work. Nevertheless, its report had to be evaluated on the basis of the actual effectiveness of the work done. From that standpoint, it was somewhat disturbing to read in paragraph 14, after the statement: "There is widespread agreement in the Committee that the programme of work... should reflect a rational system of priorities...", a further sentence beginning: "Although it [the Committee] was unable to propose a coherent system of priorities at this time..." Similarly, paragraph 41 stated: "... The majority of the Committee were of the opinion that it would not be feasible to work out such a comprehensive set of priorities until the Committee had completed its three- or four-year programme of work in which it would review all of the activities of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields..." Thus, under the existing conditions, the Committee had been unable to carry out one of its essential tasks.

15. His delegation was not convinced that the situation could be radically changed through the proposed revision of the Committee's work programme or the reorganization of the meeting schedule. It felt that there was an immediate need for a full exploration of the practicality of having a mechanism for programme and co-ordination within the Economic and Social Council, bearing in mind especially the Committee's role in so important an assignment as examining the work programme and budgetary requirements for 1970 and programme projections for 1971.

16. It would certainly be wrong for the major contributors to determine the orientation of programme priorities. His delegation shared the concern of the developing countries, referred to in paragraph 33 of the report, at what they had considered to be the very negative statements and comments made by certain developed countries on the increasing rate of growth of the budget and programmes of the United Nations. The positions outlined in paragraphs 34 and 35 did not solve the dilemma. As noted in paragraph 38, any attempt by the major contributors to impose a ceiling on the regular budget of the United Nations would constitute a violation of General Assembly resolution 2370 (XXII). Moreover, the efficiency of United Nations economic and technical assistance could not be based solely on the percentage of the contributions of Member States to the regular budget. No one claimed theoretically that the United Nations was an organization in which the right to vote was tied to the percentage of the contribution, but in practice that was becoming the case. It was essential that the developing countries should not only be more adequately represented in the Secretariat but should also have more say in all policy-making decisions. In addition, there was a need to give a greater voice to the smaller developed countries, such as the Scandinavian and Benelux countries, whose financial contribution to some organizations of the United Nations system was constantly increasing. It would also be advisable to examine the possibility of the developing and smaller developed countries' placing additional financial and human resources at the disposal of the United Nations, since confidence in the Organization as an instrument for international collaboration was vital to developed and developing countries alike.

17. Mr. GUPTA (India) said that, as India was a member of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, its comments were incorporated in the report (E/4670 and Corr.1). He wished to associate himself with the statement made by the representative of Yugoslavia. With regard to the procedure for dealing with the report, it was important that the reports on both parts of the session should be referred to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

*The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.*