



## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

FIFTY-FIRST SESSION

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Tuesday, 20 July 1971

at 3.55 p.m.

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

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*President:* Mr. DRISS (Tunisia)

## AGENDA ITEM 6

## Regional co-operation:

- (a) Reports of the regional economic commissions and of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE  
(E/5054 AND CORR.1)

1. The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to the report of the Economic Committee on item 6 (a) (E/5054 and Corr.1), paragraph 12 of which contained several draft resolutions and two draft decisions which the Economic Committee was recommending to the Council for adoption.

*Draft resolution I*

2. Mr. VIAUD (France) considered that, after the deletion of the first preambular paragraph, decided upon by the Economic Committee and contained in document E/5054/Corr.1), operative paragraphs 1 and 2, in which the only United Nations body mentioned was ECE, might lead to a misunderstanding. He would therefore like to add the following interpretation for the record:

In its resolution 2654 (XXV) the General Assembly had fixed the scale of assessments for Member States' contributions to the United Nations budget for the financial years 1971-1973. Sub-paragraph (d) of that resolution provided that States which were not Members of the United Nations but which participated in certain of its activities should be called upon to contribute towards the 1971, 1972 and

1973 expenses of such activities. In the scale established for those States, Switzerland's assessment had been set at 0.84 per cent. The contribution in respect of ECE which was referred to in operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution I should also be at the rate of 0.84 per cent.

3. The PRESIDENT said that, if there were no objections, he would consider draft resolution I (E/5054 and Corr.1, para. 12) adopted.

*It was so decided.*

4. The PRESIDENT congratulated the Government of the Swiss Confederation on Switzerland's admission to ECE.

5. Mr. PIACITELLI (Italy) added his congratulations to those of the President. As a sponsor of the resolution just adopted, he proposed that the Council should, as an exception and without establishing a precedent, invite the observer for Switzerland to make a statement.

6. The PRESIDENT said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Council decided to hear the observer for Switzerland.

*It was so decided.*

7. Mr. HUMBERT (Observer for Switzerland) said he had asked permission to speak in order to thank the Council for the vote of confidence it had just given his country. He addressed particular thanks to the sponsors of the draft resolution.

8. His country already had close relations with ECE. It had participated, with consultative status, in the Commission's work since 1947, and its representatives had even assumed high office in several of the Commission's subsidiary organs. The question might be asked why it had not applied for membership of the Commission earlier. In order to answer that question it was necessary to recall conditions after the war and Switzerland's position of neutrality. Although ECE's role was an economic and technical one, circumstances at the time had prevented his country from joining it. Today, however, in view of the solidarity which bound countries ever closer together, Switzerland wanted to regularize its status in relation to ECE, whose main purpose under its terms of reference<sup>1</sup> - that of "maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the European countries both among themselves and with other countries of the world" - was fully in harmony with its own aims. To Switzerland, as a small country lacking in raw materials, international economic relations were of the utmost importance.

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3* (E/4641), annex III.

9. Switzerland's admission to ECE, which would make the Commission more representative of Europe, fell within the wider context of its policy with regard to the United Nations. In 1969 the Swiss Parliament had approved a report on the Government's intention to draw closer to those United Nations organs which were open to non-Member States that were members of specialized agencies, and to bear a still greater share of the Organization's expenses, particularly for purposes of development aid.

10. For all those reasons he welcomed the result of the vote, which would enable the Swiss authorities to take a larger share in ECE's responsibilities and decisions.

11. In reply to a question put by Mr. ZVEZDINE (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the PRESIDENT confirmed that the record would show that the observer for Switzerland had made a statement as an exceptional measure which did not constitute a precedent.

12. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) pointed out that Switzerland was host to the Council and that its observer had spoken after the adoption of a resolution admitting it to ECE.

#### *Draft resolution II*

13. The PRESIDENT called the Council's attention to draft resolution II in document E/5054 concerning "Regional and sub-regional advisory services".

14. Mr. ZVEZDINE (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) drew attention to an omission in operative paragraph 1 of the text. The sponsors had agreed to insert after the words "a separate section in the United Nations Regular Budget", the words "concerning technical programmes".

15. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that in the Economic Committee his country had abstained from voting on operative paragraph 1, not as a matter of principle, but because it considered the text unclear. It had no objection to the inclusion of a separate section to finance a system of regional advisory services. On the other hand France had voted against operative paragraph 2 on the grounds that the Council was being invited to adopt a draft resolution without knowing its financial implications – a step contrary to the wishes of the General Assembly. The Secretariat had quoted figures which ranged from \$1.2 million to \$2.4 million, and such vagueness was unacceptable.

16. His delegation asked for a separate vote on each of those two paragraphs.

17. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) drew attention to the results of the vote taken in the Economic Committee on that draft resolution, which had originally been submitted by his delegation. He did not think that the debate on the substance of the question should be re-opened in the Council. The reservations entered by delegations appeared in the summary records of the Economic Committee's meetings. A more thorough discussion could, perhaps, be held in the General Assembly.

18. He requested that the vote be taken by roll-call.

19. Mr. ZAGORIN (United States of America), briefly reiterating the views expressed by his delegation in the Economic Committee, said that, first his delegation recognized the need to develop regional and sub-regional advisory services, although it saw no need to create a separate section for that purpose in the regular budget. Secondly, it thought that UNDP should be requested to provide those services with financial support, with special attention to the least developed countries. Thirdly, it considered that the solution proposed in operative paragraph 2 was unrealistic in view of the current financial difficulties of the United Nations.

20. Mr. McCARTHY (United Kingdom), Mr. ZVEZDINE (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. PIACITELLI (Italy) also maintained the objections which their delegations had raised concerning the draft resolution in the Economic Committee.

21. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) said that he thought the financial implications of the draft resolution too serious for the Council to be able to take a decision; they should be examined by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. Even so, his delegation was not opposed in principle to the text under consideration.

22. In reply to a question put by Mr. ZVEZDINE (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. de SEYNES (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) explained that, in the corrigendum (E/AC.6/L.421/Corr.1) to the draft resolution submitted to the Economic Committee by the Sudan, the word "part", which had been used in error had been replaced by the word "section". The services in question were all included in part V of the budget, but in different sections.

23. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) confirmed that explanation.

24. Mr. VIAUD (France) asked for separate votes on operative paragraphs 1 and 2 of the draft resolution.

25. The PRESIDENT put to the vote operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution II.

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

*New Zealand, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.*

*In favour:* Pakistan, Peru, Sudan, Tunisia, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Brazil, Ceylon, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Niger, Norway.

*Against:* United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Hungary.

*Abstaining:* New Zealand, France.

*Operative paragraph 1 was adopted by 19 votes to 4, with 2 abstentions.*

26. The PRESIDENT put to the vote operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution II.

*At the request of the representative of the Sudan, the vote on operative paragraph 2 was taken by roll-call.*

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

*In favour:* Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Sudan, Tunisia, Yugoslavia, Brazil, Ceylon, Ghana, Haiti.

*Against:* Hungary, New Zealand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, France.

*Abstaining:* Italy, Uruguay, Greece.

*Operative paragraph 2 was adopted by 17 votes to 6, with 3 abstentions.*

27. The PRESIDENT put to the vote draft resolution II as a whole.

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

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

*In favour:* Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Sudan, Tunisia, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Brazil, Ceylon, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar.

*Against:* United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, France, Hungary.

*Abstaining:* New Zealand.

*The draft resolution was adopted by 20 votes to 5, with 1 abstention.*

28. Mr. RAZAFINDRABE (Madagascar) said that he had voted in favour of the draft resolution. However, operative paragraph 2 was rather unclear; it recommended that operations under part V, section 13, should be concentrated "substantially to support country programmes of the least developed among the developing countries", but it gave no figures to indicate the relative order of magnitude of such support and, what was more serious, did not identify the countries in question. That omission was apt to create difficulties.

29. Mr. GROS ESPIELL (Uruguay) said that his delegation had supported the draft resolution as a whole but had abstained from voting on operative paragraph 2, first for lack of precise information as to the origin of the sum quoted, secondly because the explanations given concerning the text did not seem to apply to the Spanish text, and thirdly because the text did not make it clear which developing countries were to be regarded as the least developed.

### *Draft resolutions III to X*

30. The PRESIDENT said that draft resolutions III to X had been adopted without objection by the Economic Committee. If there were no objections, he would consider them adopted by the Council.

*It was so decided.*

31. Mr. ZVEZDINE (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation maintained the views it had expressed in the Economic Committee, in particular with regard to the financial implications of those resolutions.

### *Draft resolution XI*

32. The PRESIDENT said that draft resolution XI had been adopted without objection by the Economic Committee. If there were no objections, he would consider it adopted by the Council.

*It was so decided.*

### *Draft decision XII*

33. The PRESIDENT said that draft decision XII had been adopted by the Economic Committee by 18 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.

34. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that his delegation could not accept the suggestion made in the Secretary-General's note (E/5051) that the names of the persons proposed by OAU at the request of ECA, as representatives of Angola, Guinea (Bissau) and Mozambique, should be forwarded to the General Assembly.

35. When the representatives of the national liberation movements of those territories had been admitted as observers to the Conference of African Ministers at Tunis in February 1971, the French representative had wholly reserved his position regarding the legal basis of that decision. His delegation wished to renew its reservations so that they might appear in the Council's report if the Council should decide to transmit to the General Assembly the proposal by OAU, since it wished to maintain for its representatives at the General Assembly complete freedom of action regarding the position they might have to adopt if the problem was raised there.

36. The PRESIDENT said that the recommendation in question had met with no objection among the members of ECA, and that the problem was essentially the concern of the African countries. The French delegation was, of course, entitled to place on record all the comments which it might wish to make.

37. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) said that his delegation's vote in the Economic Committee did not imply that any definite position had been adopted regarding the representation of those territories.

38. Mr. ZAGORIN (United States of America) said that his delegation had found it impossible to support the draft decision in the Economic Committee. In his opinion the administering Power was alone competent to appoint representatives for Angola, Guinea (Bissau) and Mozambique, as was made clear in the note submitted by the Legal Counsel in 1964.<sup>2</sup> His delegation recognized that the draft decision itself did not deal with the substance of the problem, but only with the question of forwarding the Secretary-General's note to the General Assembly. However, it would be compelled to abstain from voting, for the way in which ECA had dealt with the matter was incompatible with the terms of the note he had mentioned.

39. Mr. ODERO-JOWI (Kenya) emphasized the importance of the principle underlying that draft decision. The Council's vote should affirm the right of the peoples of Guinea (Bissau), Mozambique and Angola to enjoy complete freedom and self-determination. In his opinion there was no basis for any technical or legal objections, and he hoped that representatives of those three countries would soon be able to sit in the Council as full members.

40. Mr. SMOQUINA (Italy) said that, for the reasons it had stated in the Economic Committee, his delegation would have to abstain from voting on that draft decision.

41. Mr. MILTON (United Kingdom) said that the administering Power was alone competent to appoint persons to represent those territories in ECA.

42. Mr. RAZAFINDRABE (Madagascar) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft decision to transmit the Secretary-General's note to the General Assembly.

43. Mr. DENOT MEDEIROS (Brazil) said that he could not support the draft decision; he drew attention to the reservations made by his delegation in the Economic Committee.

44. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) said that his delegation maintained the reservations and interpretations which it had stated in the Economic Committee.

45. Mr. ANTOINE (Haiti) said that he supported the draft decision in principle and in token of solidarity with the countries mentioned, but that he did not approve the list attached to the Secretary-General's note.

46. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) expressed great satisfaction at the decision of ECA to admit representatives of Guinea (Bissau), Mozambique and Angola to membership; the participation of the national liberation movements could only help to speed up the liberation of those countries.

47. Mr. GROS ESPIELL (Uruguay) said that, when the vote had been taken in the Economic Committee, his delegation had abstained on legal grounds. After a closer examination of the issue, however, it had reconsidered its

position, and would vote in favour of the draft decision on the understanding that his vote would not imply the adoption of any definite position regarding the legal problem of the representation of those territories but would be concerned solely with the transmittal of the Secretary-General's note to the General Assembly.

48. Mr. GHACHEM (Tunisia) said that he would support the draft decision, as the participation of those countries in the work of ECA could only help to give effect to the policy of decolonization advocated by the United Nations.

49. Mr. AWUY (Indonesia) said that he would also support the draft resolution, for he hoped to see those countries gain independence and take part in the work of the Council in the near future.

50. The PRESIDENT considered that those three countries should be represented in ECA, all of whose members recognized their right to dignity and to independence.

51. He put to the vote draft decision XII (E/5054, para. 12).

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

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

*In favour:* Ceylon, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Niger, Norway, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Sudan, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

*Against:* None.

*Abstaining:* United States of America, France, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Brazil.

*The draft decision was adopted by 21 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.*

#### *Draft decision XIII*

52. The PRESIDENT said that no objections had been raised to the draft decision in the Economic Committee. If there were no objections, he would consider it adopted unanimously.

*It was so decided.*

#### AGENDA ITEM 6

##### Regional co-operation:

- (b) Report on the meetings of the Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions
- and
- (d) Study on regional structures

#### REPORT OF THE CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE (E/5053)

53. The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to examine the report of the Co-ordination Committee

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Thirty-seventh Session, Annexes, agenda item 17, document I/3963.

(E/5053) on agenda item 6, sub-items (b) and (d). The first line in paragraph 3 of the French text should read: "*Le Comité recommande que le Conseil prenne note avec satisfaction du rapport.*"

54. If he heard no objection, the recommendation made in that document, which had been adopted unanimously by the Co-ordination Committee, would also be considered adopted unanimously by the Council.

*It was so decided.*

#### AGENDA ITEM 11

##### United Nations Conference on the Human Environment

##### REPORT OF THE CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE (E/5052)

55. Mr. KRYLOV (Union of Socialist Soviet Republics) said that, when his delegation had supported the Co-ordination Committee's draft recommendation, it had reserved the right to make certain corrections to the summary record. Those corrections had been submitted in good time but did not appear in summary record E/AC.24/SR.414, and that document should be corrected.

56. His delegation supported the recommendation submitted to the Council but it wished to stress the need to make the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment truly universal in character by admitting all countries which wished to participate in it. The German Democratic Republic, a highly developed industrial country, was very interested in co-operation, on equal terms, in activities concerned with the environment. The participation of that country in the Stockholm Conference would be extremely useful and would add to the realism of such decisions as might be taken.

57. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) said that the summary record would be corrected to take the USSR representative's comments into account.

58. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council unanimously accepted the Co-ordination Committee's recommendation.

*It was so decided.*

#### AGENDA ITEM 14

Assistance in cases of natural disaster (E/4994, E/5012 (Part I), paras. 41-43; E/5038, chap. VI; E/C.2/727, E/C.2/731, E/C.2/732, E/C.2/735, E/C.2/742, E/L.1404, E/L.1425, E/L.1430, E/L.1434, E/L.1436, E/L.1437, E/L.1438)

59. At the invitation of the PRESIDENT, Mr. HILL (Consultant to the Secretary-General) introduced the Secretary-General's report on assistance in cases of natural disaster (E/4994).

60. In preparing that report, which had originally been requested in General Assembly resolution 2435 (XXIII), the Secretariat had consulted not only Governments and the various organizations of the United Nations system but also the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies and a number of voluntary agencies and, as a result, had gained a clearer view of the problems which the assisting organizations had to face. Furthermore the consultations had led to a consensus of opinion on the action required and on various aspects of the problem.

61. The resultant recommendations were set out in chapters I-VI of the report. Chapter I dealt with prevention, control and prediction of natural disasters. Chapter II dealt with pre-disaster planning and preparedness. It also discussed questions of stockpiling, training of relief units and assistance from abroad. Chapter III dealt with the action to be taken when a disaster struck. The office for disaster assistance which it was proposed to establish would be able to help in co-ordinating the action taken by the various United Nations bodies, to transmit to Governments and the organizations concerned information about relief needs, to channel Governments' gifts and facilitate their transport, and thus to supplement and support the work of the Red Cross and other voluntary agencies. The League of Red Cross Societies should continue to assume primary responsibility for organizing international relief at the first stage of the emergency. Chapter IV dealt with long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction and with the vital role which the United Nations and other related organizations were called upon to play in that connexion. Chapter V dealt with organizational arrangements at the international level and recommended the establishment of an office to negotiate with Governments and voluntary agencies concerning the aid they might be able to supply; to keep in touch, through the resident representatives, with disaster-prone countries; and to organize an adequate system for the collection and dissemination of information. Chapter VI dealt with finance. It underlined the "real and urgent need for a substantial increase in the funds available for immediate use in case of emergency" (E/4994, para. 98), and expressed the hope that Governments would find it possible to make funds available to national Red Cross societies and to the League of Red Cross Societies. It also discussed the question of establishing an emergency relief fund consisting of voluntary contributions from all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies.

62. The Secretary-General recommended that in cases of natural disaster the United Nations should give every assistance and support to Governments and voluntary agencies, but he also made it clear that the primary responsibility for protecting the life, health and property of people within its frontiers rested with the Government of the country concerned. International assistance should only supplement, and would depend very largely for its effectiveness on the efforts of the country itself.

63. He had three further points to make in explanation of the report. First, the natural disasters with which the report was concerned were sudden and largely unpredictable, and required varied assistance from outside the

afflicted country. Secondly, the report described ways in which the international community could organize itself to help relieve major catastrophes in countries which were not in a position to face them unaided. Thirdly, the Secretary-General's mandate was limited to recommendations for action in connexion with natural disasters, but the Secretary-General thought that many of his recommendations should be equally helpful in other emergencies.

64. It was the Secretary-General's conviction that the United Nations should not be called upon to undertake more than it could effectively carry out, and that it should not raise false hopes in certain countries. The Secretary-General thought, however, that in the light of the rec-

ommendations made in the report, and with the support of the resident representatives of UNDP, of the various bodies of the United Nations and of Governments, it should be possible to deal with the problems of natural disasters.

65. The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to a communication addressed to him by the Permanent Representative of Chile (F/L.1436) and suggested that, under rule 75 of the rules of procedure, the observer for that country should be allowed to participate in the debate.

*It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.