



President: Mr. Károly SZARKA (Hungary).

AGENDA ITEM 9

Actions arising out of decisions of the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session (*concluded*) (E/L.1468 and Corr. 1 and 2 and Add. 1 and 2)

1. The PRESIDENT said that the Council should continue consideration of the note by the Secretary-General (E/L.1468 and Corr.1 and 2 and Add. 1 and 2) on the item under discussion.

Section A of document E/L.1468 (continued)

Paragraph 9 (b) (continued)

2. Mr. VIAUD (France) explained the French delegation's attitude towards the current situation. The Economic and Social Council had before it a proposal by the Secretary-General which constituted a general rule and was based on an earlier decision of the General Assembly. His delegation was prepared to endorse the proposal but it considered that the decision which the Council had taken on 20 December 1971 concerning the Committee on Science and Technology and the Committee on Review and Appraisal remained valid. It was not necessary to establish whether those two Committees should have detailed summary records since the Council had already settled the matter. Lastly, by taking its decision, the Economic and Social Council had not precluded future consideration of the question of documentation, which was of prime importance. His delegation appealed to those which considered the Council's decision as still valid not to request a new vote on the question because it would be forced to maintain its position and to abstain, which would be regrettable at the beginning of a new year.

3. Mr. BRITO (Brazil) agreed with the representative of France that the question which had been settled should not be reopened. The Council, after a thorough debate, had decided that summary records would be prepared for those two bodies. The General Assembly was inviting the Council to adopt provisions similar to those contained in paragraph 10 (b) of resolution 2538 (XXIV). It might be appropriate for the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to consider the situation. The lack of summary records sometimes led to difficulties.

4. Mr. GUEVARA ARZE (Bolivia) said that without the statement which the representative of the United States had made, he would have approved in principle the position of Ghana and France. Now, however, it

appeared that for certain countries, including the United States and the USSR, to approve the Secretary-General's proposal would amount to abolishing the summary records of two subsidiary organs, while for others, such as Brazil and France, that approval would not automatically imply that they would be abolished. Hence, the Council had three possibilities: to approve the Secretary-General's suggestion without deciding whether it should apply to the two subsidiary organs; to reject the suggestion; to approve it with an amendment as proposed by the representative of Tunisia. The decision which the Council would adopt would have the last sentence reading as follows: "This decision will not apply to the Committee on Review and Appraisal and the Committee on Science and Technology, which summary records were authorized to maintain in accordance with the decision adopted by the Council at its 1808th meeting, on 20 December 1971."

5. Mr. ZAGORIN (United States of America) said he found wisdom in the proposal of the Bolivian delegate and that he was prepared to reconsider his earlier statement that he would be obliged to object to such language. He wondered whether it would not be possible for the Council to accept the proposed additional sentence without a vote.

6. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) supported that approach and requested the closure of the debate. If there were any objections, he would request a vote.

7. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) said that he was opposed to the amendment proposed by the representative of Bolivia because the decisions taken by the General Assembly, and particularly resolution 2836 (XXVI) of 17 December 1971, should be respected. The Council had too little experience with the two new Committees to be able to decide if summary records were necessary or not. For his part, he was afraid that summary records would lead to excessive "verbiage" and that representatives would speak "for the record". He was also thinking of the delegations of developing countries which did not have enough staff to read the summary records thoroughly. All in all, he would therefore prefer to leave the text as it was.

8. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) requested a vote on his motion to close the debate since there had been an objection.

9. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) said that, in order to avoid a vote, he would withdraw his objection.

10. Mr. BRITO (Brazil), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that he had no objections to the text proposed by Bolivia but would have to abstain since

he considered that the Council should take the circumstances into account when acting on the recommendations of the General Assembly.

11. Miss LIM (Malaysia) said that she was opposed to the Bolivian amendment since it would constitute an unfortunate precedent; the General Assembly resolution had been adopted before that of the Economic and Social Council, which was therefore covered by its provisions. The French proposal was more logical in that it left the paragraph as a whole as it was.

12. Mr. ODERO-JOWI (Kenya) said that he found the Bolivian amendment pointless. The Kenyan delegation did not see that there was any contradiction between the General Assembly's resolution of 17 December and the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council on 20 December. Notwithstanding such reservations, his delegation would not vote against the amendment.

13. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Soviet delegation could not endorse the Bolivian amendment since it ran counter to the General Assembly's resolution. It would be preferable to leave it to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to continue the discussion of that question, which had not been adequately studied by the Council. If there was a vote, his delegation would vote against the amendment while reserving the right to return to the question.

14. The PRESIDENT put the Bolivian amendment to the vote.

The Bolivian amendment was adopted by 15 votes to 4, with 7 abstentions.

15. The PRESIDENT put the recommendation as a whole, as amended, to the vote.

The recommendation of the Secretary-General in paragraph 9 (b) as amended, was adopted by 17 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

Paragraph 9 (c)

16. The PRESIDENT drew the attention of members of the Council to document E/L.1468/Corr. 2, which had just been circulated.

17. Mr. HEMANS (United Kingdom) asked why the recommendation in question had been changed so radically.

18. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) said that there had not been time to transmit the text of the Joint Inspection Unit's recommendation to all the organs concerned and hence the "Action recommended" had been amended so that the Commission on Human Rights might receive the text in question.

19. Mr. HEMANS (United Kingdom) preferred the recommendation as it was in the original text. While not underestimating the importance of the periodic reports to the Commission on Human Rights, attention should also

be paid to curtailing documentation. It was perfectly in order for the Council to take a decision on the question, it being understood that the Commission on Human Rights could adopt a recommendation to the contrary if it disagreed. He therefore formally proposed that the text of paragraph 9 (c) as contained in document E/L.1468 should be retained.

20. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) supported the United Kingdom representative's proposal.

21. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) said that it would be more appropriate to consider document E/L.1468/Corr. 2 a revision, since a substantive change was involved.

22. If the Council adopted the original text (see E/L.1468), certain languages inevitably would have an advantage over the others. Moreover, the General Assembly was not making a formal recommendation to the Council but was simply drawing its attention to recommendation 10 in section IX of part A of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit.¹ It would therefore be more appropriate to transmit the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit to the Commission on Human Rights, as was suggested in document E/L.1468/Corr.2.

23. Mr. AKWEI (Ghana) said that he also believed that the revised version was more appropriate and would enable the Council to exercise the wisdom and caution which were particularly imperative in the present situation. Although he shared the concerns of the United Kingdom representative regarding the volume of documentation, he believed that before taking a decision the Council should allow the major body concerned, namely, the Commission on Human Rights, the opportunity to study the recommendation.

24. Mr. MAHMASSANI (Lebanon) said that he fully shared that view. He also pointed out that the Council now actually had only one proposal before it, the one appearing in document E/L.1468/Corr.2, since that text replaced the original version.

25. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said he would like to know whether the periodic reports were submitted by the Secretariat; if they were, the Council would be establishing a dangerous precedent by agreeing that they should be submitted in only one working language. His delegation would be able to accept the proposal of the United Kingdom representative if two working languages were involved.

26. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights) replied that the periodic reports were submitted by Member States and the specialized agencies and that information was transmitted under the periodic reports system by certain non-governmental organizations. The reports arrived in several languages, including some which were not official languages of the United Nations. In its report on part A of the Joint Inspection Unit's report, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and

¹ A/8319 and Corr.1.

Budgetary Questions had pointed out to the General Assembly that the utility of the reports would be likely to suffer if they were issued only in their original language.² Inasmuch as the Council's current meetings were devoted essentially to the organization of the work of the fifty-second session, and as it appeared that the question warranted initial consideration by the Commission on Human Rights, the Secretary-General had considered that it would be preferable for the Council to seek the views of the Commission, which had an *ad hoc* committee responsible for examining periodic reports, before taking a final decision. He believed that the Commission would be in a position to reach a solution which would take into account both the desires of the Joint Inspection Unit and the concerns of the Advisory Committee. The question of languages did not arise in connexion with the analytical summary, which was prepared by the Secretariat, since the Joint Inspection Unit was recommending that it should continue to be circulated in the four languages. Dispensing with the index, which was only three or four pages long, would not result in a considerable savings in documentation; it had proved very useful thus far, both in facilitating reference to the periodic reports by the Governments concerned and in carrying out other studies within the human rights programme. All things considered, therefore, the wording of the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit appeared to be somewhat too restrictive. The wording of part (b) of that recommendation could give rise to misunderstanding: The Joint Inspection Unit had proposed giving limited distribution to the preparatory documents and preliminary reports of the Special Rapporteurs, but had made no reference to the Sub-Commission's documentation as a whole. The manner in which the recommendation was drafted could therefore create confusion. That was why the Secretary-General had felt that, before taking a final decision, the Council usefully could take into account the views of its competent subsidiary bodies which were directly concerned, in particular the Commission on Human Rights.

27. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) said that he would like to know approximately how many reports were received, how much their translation cost and what decisions the Commission on Human Rights had taken in the past on the basis of any one of those reports.

28. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights) said that the number of reports, which currently were submitted in successive biennial series — civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights and freedom of information — averaged 35 to 40. The reports and the analytical summary prepared by the Secretariat were examined one week prior to the session of the Commission on Human Rights by the *Ad hoc* Committee on Periodic Reports, which prepared for the Commission a report and draft resolutions, which the Commission had adopted unanimously in recent years, dealing with the procedure for the examination of the reports and with their substance. The Commission and the Council itself had in the past held the view that, at least until such time as the International Covenants came into force, the periodic reports were most useful, for they

were one of the few really practical ways of obtaining information from Member States on the manner in which they gave effect to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments of the United Nations. As to the cost of translation, exact figures were not available at present and it could prove difficult to quote a figure, since the periodic reports were translated as part of the regular workload of the language services of the Secretariat.

29. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he also believed that the Council should not take a decision without taking into account the views of the Commission on Human Rights. He therefore endorsed the text proposed by the Secretary-General in document E/L.1468/Corr.2.

30. Mr. HEMANS (United Kingdom) said that it would appear from the explanations given by the Director of the Division of Human Rights that the Secretariat had issued a corrigendum because it did not endorse the conclusions of the Joint Inspection Unit. It was not for the Secretariat to adopt a position on the matter. The Council was sovereign and the Secretariat should not take it upon itself to influence the Council one way or the other.

31. Furthermore, he had had the opportunity to take part in the work of the Commission on Human Rights and it had been his impression that 60 to 70 per cent of the representatives did not read all the periodic reports submitted and that discussion on the item was held merely for the sake of form. It was thus unnecessary for the Secretariat to continue devoting so much time and effort to those documents; and he therefore reiterated the proposal he had already submitted formally.

32. Mr. SCHREIBER (Director, Division of Human Rights) feared that a misunderstanding had arisen: the Secretariat was not contesting the Joint Inspection Unit's proposals as such; it simply had also wished to take into account the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the reports, as well as its own experience. The Secretariat had suggested the text contained in the corrigendum (E/L.1468/Corr.2) because the original version appeared to call for too rigid a decision and because, in its view, the Council should be able to take a decision in full knowledge of the facts, namely, having at its disposal the comments of the Commission on Human Rights, which had direct responsibilities in the matter and was therefore the body which was most immediately concerned. Provision should be made for the Commission's comments to be transmitted to the Council at its fifty-second session.

33. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) said that he also believed that the corrigendum actually constituted a revision. It would have been preferable had a representative of the Secretariat explained from the outset why the text had been changed.

34. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said that a question of principle was involved. The Joint Inspection Unit had assumed a right which it was not entitled to exercise in

² A/8532 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 43.

submitting a recommendation regarding working languages, and it was imperative for the Council to point that out.

35. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) recalled that the report of the Joint Inspection Unit had been discussed at length in the Fifth Committee and that the General Assembly had adopted resolution 2538 (XXIV) by a large majority. He therefore preferred to abide by that decision and accordingly would vote in favour of the proposal of the United Kingdom representative.

36. Mr. FIGUEROA (Chile) feared that adoption of the original text might limit the working capacity of the Commission on Human Rights, since it was possible that its members did not have sufficient linguistic knowledge to make a proper study of the reports in their original language. It would therefore be desirable, as was proposed in document E/L.1468/Corr.2, to seek their advice on the matter.

37. Mr. LISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation supported the views of the representative of Chile and was categorically opposed to the position which the representative of New Zealand had taken. The General Assembly, which was the supremely competent organ of the United Nations, had taken no firm decision on the proposal submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit but had confined itself to drawing the attention of the Council to recommendation 10 in section IX of part A of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit. Consequently, since the General Assembly itself had not taken a substantive decision on the matter, it was for the Council to act and it could not do so without first seeking the opinion of the Commission on Human Rights. In consulting the latter, the Council would only be conforming with its usual practice, which consisted in taking account of the views of its subsidiary bodies before adopting decisions of concern to them. In view of those considerations, his delegation approved of the wording of the corrigendum issued in document E/L.1468/Corr.2 and hoped that the members of the Council would recognize that the Commission on Human Rights should have an opportunity to make known its observations on the substance of the recommendation submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit and would be willing to act tactfully with regard to that body.

38. The PRESIDENT said that the corrigendum issued in document E/L.1468/Corr.2 was the only text now before the Council, unless one of the Council's members wished to submit another text.

39. Mr. HEMANS (United Kingdom) formally proposed that the recommendation made by the Secretary-General in document E/L.1468/Corr.2 should be replaced by a decision of the Council to endorse the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit as set forth in paragraph 9 (c) of section A of document E/L.1468.

The proposal was rejected, 5 votes being cast in favour and 5 against, with 14 abstentions.

The recommendation of the Secretary-General in document E/L.1468/Corr.2 was put to the vote.

The recommendation of the Secretary-General in paragraph 9 (c), as amended (E/L.1468/Corr.2), was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

Paragraphs 9 (d) to (f)

The recommendations of the Secretary-General in paragraphs 9 (d) to (f) were adopted.

Paragraph 10 (E/L.1468/Add.1)

The recommendation of the Secretary-General in paragraph 10 was adopted.

Paragraph 11 (E/L.1468/Add.2)

The recommendation of the Secretary-General in paragraph 11 was adopted.

Sections B and C of document E/L.1468

40. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) wished to know whether the Council would receive from the Secretariat another working document giving an over-all view of its programme of work when it eventually adopted its definitive agenda.

41. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) said that that was the purpose of Conference Room Paper ESA/ECOSOC/LII/CRP.1, which had already been distributed to the members of the Council under item 10 of the agenda.

42. The PRESIDENT said that a corrigendum (E/L.1468/Corr.1) to section B had been issued. He invited the Council to take note of sections B and C of the note by the Secretary-General.

It was so decided.

43. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) drew the Council's attention to General Assembly resolution 2898 (XXVI) of 22 December 1971, which concerned the restructuring of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Under the terms of paragraph 3 of that resolution, the Assembly had endorsed the suggestion made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions³ that it would perhaps be preferable for the Secretary-General to reconsider the question in 1972, at a time when he would be able to submit well-founded recommendations on the organization of the Department as a whole, and on the total resources which should be available to it. According to the Advisory Committee, that method would have the added advantage of giving legislative bodies closely concerned with the role of the Department, such as the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, an opportunity to consider any aspects of the Secretary-General's report which might be held to have policy repercussions. It would also make it possible

³ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 81, document A/8408/Add.13, para. 11.

to ensure that the recommendations reflected the views of the new Secretary-General. The Secretary-General intended to include an item relating to that question in the programme of work for 1972 of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. The Council would thus have an opportunity to consider the question in the light of the report to be prepared by the Committee.

44. Mr. LISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Secretary of the Council for the explanation he had just given but thought that there was nevertheless a problem which arose in that regard. In the resolution in question, the General Assembly entrusted weighty responsibilities to the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. His delegation therefore wished the Secretary of the Council to supplement the information he had just given by stating, in particular, what means were envisaged for ensuring that the time-limits set by the General Assembly would be respected.

45. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) said that the determination of the session at which the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination would have that question before it would depend primarily on the date on which the report of the Secretary-General was issued and the time which delegations would need to study it. However, it appeared that the Council would be able to discuss the question at its fifty-third session, at the latest.

46. Mr. AN (China) noted that China had been participating for only a short time in the work of the United Nations and that it was therefore not yet familiar with all its traditions. Moreover, his delegation had not participated in the work of the Second Committee and accordingly wished to be able to give further consideration to the questions relating to item 9, with regard to which it reserved the right to make other comments at a later stage.

47. Mr. LISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) took note with satisfaction of the supplementary information the Secretary of the Council had just given concerning the important question of the restructuring of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In view of those explanations and the decision taken by the General Assembly, his delegation assumed that the Secretariat would take no steps to reorganize the Department until it had sought the advice of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Economic and Social Council.

AGENDA ITEM 10

Basic programme of work of the Council in 1972 and consideration of the provisional agenda for the fifty-second session (E/L.1469 and Corr.1, E/L.1474, E/L.1475; ESA/ECOSOC/LII/CRP.1)

48. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) drew the Council's attention to item 2 of the annotated list of agenda items for the fifty-second session (see E/L.1469 and Corr.1), which concerned housing, building and planning. Under paragraph 9 of General Assembly

resolution 2718 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, the Secretary-General had been requested to submit as soon as possible to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, an analytical review and progress report on the implementation of that resolution, taking full advantage of the preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. However, it should be noted that the progress report in question could probably not be circulated to members of the Council six weeks before the beginning of the session, as provided by rule 14 (4) of the rules of procedure of the Council. Therefore, the Council might find it advisable to postpone consideration of the item on housing, building and planning to the fifty-third session.

49. Regarding item 5 (b) of the list, on permanent sovereignty over natural resources of developing countries, paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 2692 (XXV) did not specify the session during which the requested report should be reviewed by the Economic and Social Council. The Secretariat had hoped that the report might be considered at the fifty-second session but it would probably not be possible to publish it in time; it might be better for the Council to postpone consideration of that item until its fifty-third session.

50. A slight change should be made in Conference Room Paper ESA/ECOSOC/LII/CRP.1: paragraph 4 (b) (Report on the United Nations Fund for Population Activities) should be deleted and added to the list of items suggested for the fifty-third session.

51. With reference to the organization of work suggested for the fifty-second session (E/L.1474), the order in which the suggestions were listed was provisional and could, of course, be modified.

52. Mr. OGISO (Japan) pointed out that the dates set for the Council's fifty-second session proper (15 May — 2 June 1972) overlapped by a few days (the dates set for the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to be held at Santiago, Chile, from 13 April to 19 May. In the circumstances, he wondered whether it might not be possible to postpone the opening of the fifty-second session for a few days, on the understanding, of course, that the date of closure of the session would be postponed by the same number of days.

53. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) recalled that the question had already been raised during the fifty-first session and that in setting the dates for the fifty-second session the fact that there might be a certain overlap with the dates of the third session of the Conference had been taken into account. Furthermore, the calendar of conferences for 1972 was a particularly heavy one. In addition, the closure of the fifty-second session was to take place on Wednesday, 2 June, and the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was due to open on Monday, 5 June. The overlap was therefore unavoidable. Furthermore, at its spring session the Economic and Social Council mainly considered items relating to social problems and human rights and the overlap would therefore not be unduly inconvenient in practice.

54. Mr. VIAUD (France) said it was true that the calendar of conferences for 1972 drawn up by the Secretariat was not entirely satisfactory but it was on the whole an acceptable compromise in view of the large number of special meetings to be held in 1972. Furthermore, as had been noted by the Secretary of the Council, the spring session was devoted mainly to social questions and to human rights, which could be considered without the participation of economics experts, who would be detained at Santiago for a few days at the beginning of the Council's session. He would therefore not request any adjustment in those dates. The Secretariat should, however, be reminded that in a normal year the Council's spring session should be held earlier than the second half of May, to allow more time to elapse between the spring session and the summer session. In future, the Council should normally meet at the end of April at the latest.

55. Mr. OGISO (Japan) thanked the Secretary of the Council for the explanations he had given and said he understood all the problems to be taken into account in establishing the calendar of conferences. Nevertheless, he wondered whether it would not be desirable to postpone the opening meeting of the Council's Economic Committee for a few days, without changing the date of the session of the Council itself.

56. Mr. DE RIVERO (Peru) asked that the Economic Committee's meetings, or at least the consideration of some items to be allocated to the Economic Committee (see E/L.1474), should be postponed for a few days. The first item considered would be item 10, "Science and technology", concerning which a decision would certainly be taken at the third session of UNCTAD.

57. Mr. DENOT MEDEIROS (Brazil) agreed with the Japanese representative concerning the need to avoid any overlap, and supported the suggestion of the Peruvian representative. He suggested that the Social Committee should consider item 4, concerning population, which was at present allocated to the Economic Committee and was to be considered at the spring session. The United Nations had dealt with the question from a social rather than an economic point of view and the existing documents would be of more interest to the members of the Social Committee. His proposal was also aimed at lightening the agenda of the Economic Committee, to which an excessively large number of items had been allocated. He supported the proposal of the Japanese representative for a postponement in the opening of the Economic Committee's debates at the spring session.

58. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) recalled that since 1968 it had been agreed not to discuss economic questions during the spring session. Yet the agenda for the fifty-second session included almost as many economic questions as it did social questions, and the fact that the agenda for the summer session was a very heavy one did not constitute a satisfactory explanation. For instance, the item relating to science and technology, which, as had been noted, would be discussed at the third session of UNCTAD, could more appropriately be included in the agenda of the summer session. However, the item "Housing, building and planning", which was a pre-eminently social item, and the item "Population", as

the Brazilian representative had said, should be considered from the social point of view. Thus if the item "Science and technology" was postponed to the summer session and if the items "Housing, building and planning" and "Population" were retained on the agenda of the spring session, 14 items would remain, of which some could also be postponed to the summer session. In the view of his delegation, it was out of the question for the Economic Committee to meet at the beginning of the session and in any case it would be advisable for its meetings to last only one week.

59. Mr. VIAUD (France) supported the Japanese proposal to delay the start of the Economic Committee's work for several days, if it met at all during the spring session. Moreover, his delegation supported the views expressed by the Brazilian representative and asked that the item on housing, building and planning and the item on population should be discussed in the Social Committee; otherwise, the members of the Social Committee would be obliged to attend the meetings of the Economic Committee, whose experts were not competent to deal with those items. Such an arrangement would also make it possible to delay the opening of the meetings of the Economic Committee. Although he did not insist that the item "Science and technology" should be deleted from the agenda of the spring session, he was convinced that it would be impossible to consider it at that session.

60. Mr. MAHMASSANI (Lebanon) congratulated the Secretariat on the logical way in which the agenda had been drawn up. Although he felt that the items "Housing, building and planning" and "Population" were clearly of an economic nature, in view of the circumstances he would not object to transferring them to the Social Committee. The problem posed by the item on science and technology could easily be resolved by postponing its consideration until the second or third week of meetings of the Economic Committee.

61. Mr. ZAGORIN (United States of America) said that since the Committee on Science and Technology was to meet in June, it would be logical to decide on its terms of reference at the spring session. His delegation saw no reason why the Economic Committee should not meet several days later than planned. It considered the item on population to be a matter of economic importance, which should therefore be referred to the Economic Committee. Since it was vital to deal with certain economic questions at the spring session, the principle that economic questions should not be considered then should be abandoned.

62. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said he would like the Council to adopt the provisional agenda as it stood with the recommendation that only the Social Committee should meet during the spring session and that the maximum number of items should be allocated to it.

63. Mr. LISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said it was unfortunate that the Secretariat had not explained why some of the most important reports had not been prepared on time for the fifty-second session (see E/L.1475), with the result that some essential items would have to be removed from the agenda. For example,

with regard to item 2 (Housing, building and planning) it was hard to understand why the report of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, which had held its seventh session in October 1971, was not yet ready. Similarly, it had been more than a year since the Secretariat had received instructions concerning the report on natural resources mentioned under item 5 (b). Since the two items to which he had referred were of special importance for the developing countries, it was unfortunate that the Secretariat should prefer to take its time over them while preparing items of secondary importance. For example, in view of the fact that the Plenipotentiary Conference to Amend the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, would not complete its work until 24 March, there was every reason to refer item 3 (d) to the resumed fifty-third session. Similarly, item 6 (a) on the establishment of a United Nations transport economics and technology documentation centre was not of great urgency. Moreover, item 11 (b) on a world plan of action could very well be postponed to the fifty-third session among the scientific and technological questions covered by item 13 of that session's agenda.

64. With regard to the organization of work (E/L.1474), the one week set aside for plenary meetings did not seem to be enough. Moreover, some of the items referred to the Economic Committee, such as those on housing, building and planning, natural resources and the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, had social or legal aspects to which it would be necessary to devote some time in plenary. Therefore more plenary meetings should be held.

65. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council) said, in reply to the Soviet Union representative, that there had been a misunderstanding with regard to the report of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, which would be ready on time for consideration at the fifty-second session. The report which could not be submitted on time was the one to be submitted by the Secretary-General on the measures taken to implement General Assembly resolution 2718 (XXV).

66. The Secretariat had included the item on the transport economics and technology documentation centre not on its own initiative but following a decision by the Council itself.

67. With regard to the consideration of items in plenary, the Council itself had decided in paragraph 4 of resolution 1621 A (LI) that all substantive items on the agenda of a session of the Council should be allocated to the sessional committees.

68. The inclusion of the World Plan of Action on the agendas of the fifty-second and fifty-third sessions had also been decided by the Council itself in its resolution 1638 (LI), and the same was true of the terms of reference of the Committee on Science and Technology (item 10 (a)), on which the Secretary-General had to submit a report in accordance with resolution 1621 B (LI).

69. Items had to be divided between the Social Committee and the Economic Committee in such a way as to ensure a proper balance of work. Although the spring session was basically devoted to social questions, some economic questions were also included on the agenda but — there again — always on the Council's own initiative, not on the initiative of the Secretariat.

70. The chronological order of consideration of items was extremely tentative and the Council was entirely free to make whatever changes it wished.

71. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) formally proposed that the Council should adopt the following text: "The Economic and Social Council, having considered item 10 on the organization of the work of the fifty-second session decides: (1) to approve the provisional agenda subject to any changes which may be made in it during the fifty-second session; (2) to recommend that only the Social Committee should meet during the spring session and that all social questions should be allocated to that Committee; (3) to refer the other items on the provisional agenda to plenary meetings of the Council. If at a plenary meeting the Council deems it advisable, it may convene the Economic Committee to consider one or more items before a decision is taken on them in plenary."

72. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) proposed that, in view of the late hour, the meeting should be adjourned in accordance with rule 54 of the rules of procedure.

73. Mr. MAHMASSANI (Lebanon) seconded the motion.

74. Mr. VIAUD (France), speaking on a point of order, asked the Council to take an immediate decision as to the time when it would consider item 7 of its agenda (Elections).

75. The PRESIDENT said the Council would begin its consideration of item 7 on Friday, 7 January, at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 6.50 p.m.