

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

SIXTY-SECOND SESSION

Summary records of the 2046th to 2060th plenary meetings held at Headquarters, New York, from 12 April to 13 May 1977

2046th meeting

Tuesday, 12 April 1977, at 10.50 a.m.

President: Mr. Ladislav ŠMÍD (Czechoslovakia).

E/SR.2046

AGENDA ITEM 1

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (E/5917, E/L.1755)

1. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that, in addition to the elections referred to in the annotations to item 15 of the provisional agenda for the sixty-second session contained in document E/5917, the Council must also elect two members from Western European and other States to the Board of Governors of the United Nations Special Fund. A reference to those elections should be added to the annotations.

2. Mr. MAKEYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had no objection to the adoption of the provisional agenda as set out in document E/5917. However, he noted that a number of documents relating to items on the provisional agenda had not been made available in all working languages sufficiently early to enable delegations to study them. Such a situation was in contravention of rule 13 of the Council's rules of procedure. Moreover, it was difficult to understand why there had been such a delay, particularly since the material necessary for the preparation of many of the documents in question, such as the reports on the most recent sessions of the Commission for Social Development and the Commission on the Status of Women, had been in the hands of the Secretariat for some time. Such delays were not limited to the Council. A number of United Nations bodies had been obliged to convene resumed sessions and to postpone consideration of certain questions because of the unavailability of the necessary documents, thus incurring extra expenditure for the Organization. He asked the Secretariat for a detailed explanation of the situation.

3. Mr. FAURIS (France) recalled that, because of lack of time, the Council had been unable at its sixty-first session

to consider the possibility of shortening the list of items to be considered by the Committee on Science and Technology for Development at its fourth session. The agenda for that session was very heavy, particularly in view of the fact that the Committee would have to devote one week to the preparation of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development. It might be useful, therefore, if the Committee could postpone consideration of a number of those items until a later session.

4. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that the whole question of the way in which the Committee on Science and Technology for Development was to function during the preparatory period would have to be discussed by the Council at its sixty-third session. Consequently, the Council might wish to defer consideration of the matter referred to by the representative of France until that time.

5. Referring to the question asked by the representative of the Soviet Union, he said that, while he could provide a detailed report on the situation with regard to individual documents, if the Council wished to find an appropriate solution to the problem, it must adopt an over-all approach. The delay in issuing documents was attributable to the volume of documentation which the Secretariat was required to produce, and to transport and reproduction problems. In spite of those difficulties, however, all the documents for the current session were now available, with the exception of the report of the Commission on Human Rights on its thirty-third session.

6. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the provisional agenda as contained in document E/5917.

The agenda of the sixty-second session (E/5917) was adopted.

7. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council), referring to the programme of work for the second week of the session, said that it would be preferable for the Economic Committee to consider population questions after item 7, rather than before it as proposed in document E/L.1755.

8. Mr. BENHOCINE (Algeria) noted that, according to the programme of work suggested in document E/L.1755, item 3 was to be considered in plenary meetings during the second week of the session, when the Social Committee would also be meeting to consider items 10 and 14. He therefore proposed that, in order to enable smaller delegations to participate fully in the deliberations of both the Social Committee and the Council, items 10 and 14 could be considered in either the first or third weeks of the session. Alternatively, the Social Committee could be asked to organize its work so that it would meet as infrequently as possible during the second week.

9. Mr. HERRERA VEGAS (Argentina) supported the proposal made by the representative of Algeria.

10. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that, because of the limited facilities available, the Social Committee and the Council would be unable to meet simultaneously. There was therefore no danger that meetings would overlap.

11. Mr. EHSASSI (Iran) said that, since a number of the documents relating to item 11 had been issued only very recently, that item should be considered after items 10 and 14 to allow delegations sufficient time to consider the documents in question.

12. The PRESIDENT said that the organization of the work of the two Committees would be discussed by the Committees themselves.

13. Mr. ALFONSO MARTINEZ (Cuba) said that his delegation would be represented in the discussion of item

11 by persons coming from Havana for that purpose. Consequently, while he did not oppose the suggestion made by the representative of Iran, he felt that each of the Committees should be allowed to determine its own time-table.

14. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom) agreed with the views expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union with regard to the problem of documentation. He suggested that the Council could discuss the question when considering the provisional agenda for the sixty-third session.

15. Referring to the organization of work for the current session, he said that it might be best to adopt the programme as proposed in document E/L.1755. A number of Governments which intended to send experts to participate in the deliberations of the Council were working on the basis of that programme, so that any change might create problems. The Committees should be allowed to organize their own programme of work.

16. Mr. BRUCE (Canada) said that, if the Council was to discuss the question of documentation at the end of the current session, it might save time if the Secretariat could prepare a brief paper on the situation with regard to documentation.

17. The PRESIDENT said that the Bureau and the Secretariat would take care of the matter. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the programme of work proposed in document E/L.1755, on the understanding that details of the programmes of work of the Economic and Social Committees should be left to the discretion of the Committees themselves.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

2047th meeting

Tuesday, 19 April 1977, at 10.55 a.m.

President: Mr. Ladislav ŠMÍD (Czechoslovakia).

E/SR.2047

Statement by the representative of the United States of America

1. Mr. YOUNG (United States of America) emphasized the importance which his Government attached to the work of the Economic and Social Council and said that the most critical task confronting the Council was the advancement of the quality of life of humankind in all its aspects. If the Council was to be successful in its work, its members must establish a common agenda directed against the basic human misery which it was within its capacity to eliminate or alleviate; they must focus on the common enemies of humankind rather than on denunciation and polemics

against each other; they must concentrate their energy on problem-solving and not ideological arguments; and they must work towards building an effective consensus founded on those basic commitments already undertaken in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other major international instruments.

2. Because of the concern of the Government and people of the United States with the problems dealt with by the Council, he felt compelled to warn against what he sensed was a certain impatience among the people of the United States with international development programmes or "foreign aid programmes". It was not that the people of the