



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Report of the twelfth session (17 March-3 April 1958)

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Opening and duration of the session

1. The Commission on the Status of Women held its twelfth session at the European Office of the United Nations, Geneva. The session commenced on 17 March 1958 and ended on 3 April 1958.

Attendance

2. A list of the persons attending the session is given below.

MEMBERS

Argentina

Member: Mrs. Carmen P. de Perkins

Belgium

Member: Mrs. Germaine Cyfer-Diderich

Canada

Member: Mrs. Harry S. Quart
Advisers: Miss Marion Royce, Mr. Neill Currie

China

Alternate: Mrs. Elizabeth T. C. Wang Chang

Cuba

Member: Miss Uldarica Mañas

Czechoslovakia

Member: Mrs. Helena Leflerová
Advisers: Mr. L. Handl, Mrs. Valentina Jamborová

Dominican Republic

Member: Miss Minerva Bernardino

France

Member: Mrs. Marie- Héléne Lefauchaux

Israel

Member: Mrs. Mina Ben-Zvi

Japan

Member: Mrs. Setsu Tanino
Alternate: Mr. Seiji Kudo

Mexico

Alternate: Miss Elisa Aguirre

Pakistan

Member: Begum Anwar Ahmed

Poland

Member: Mrs. Zofia Dembinska

Sweden

Member: Mrs. Agda Rössel

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Member: Mrs. Tamara I. Ershova
Advisers: Miss Irene Gorodeiska, Mrs. Rahima Kolbaeva

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Member: Miss Ruth Tomlinson
Alternate: Mr. G. Raymond Gauntlett

United States of America

Member: Mrs. Lorena Hahn
Alternate: Mr. James Simsarian
Advisers: Mr. Cameron J. LaClair, Mrs. Alice A. Morrison

Venezuela

Member: Miss Panchita Soublette Saluzzo

OBSERVERS

Austria: Mr. J. G. Willfort

Italy: Miss Luciana Corcos

Netherlands: Miss A. F. W. Lusingh Meijer

Romania: Mrs. Elena Olteanu

United Arab Republic: Mr. Omar Hefny Mahmoud

Yugoslavia: Mr. Branko Komatina, Mr. Mauro Hencić (alternate)

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Mrs. Ana Figueroa, Miss M. Jaccard (alternate)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Mrs. A. K. Gegalova

World Health Organization (WHO)

Dr. M. H. Hafezi

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

CATEGORY A

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions:

Miss Marcelle Dehareng, Mr. Herman Patteet, Mr. Borek Zofka

International Federation of Christian Trade Unions:

Mr. Georges Eggermann, Miss Maria Nagels

International Organisation of Employers: Mr. Josef Vanek

World Federation of Trade Unions: Mr. Giuseppe Boglietti, Mrs. Germaine Guille, Mrs. Elena Teodorescu

World Federation of United Nations Associations:

Miss Daphne Chapman, Mrs. Tilly Kretschmer-Dorninger, Mrs. Evthokia Messinezy, Mrs. Beatrice Troupin

CATEGORY B

All-Pakistan Women's Association: Begum Mirza Khan
Catholic International Union for Social Service: Dr. Denise Louis-Bar, Mrs. Helen Weber

Commission of the Churches on International Affairs: Miss Madeleine Barot, Miss Helen Turnbull

Friends World Committee for Consultation: Mr. J. Duncan Wood, Mrs. Katharine Wood

International Abolitionist Federation: Mrs. Noëlle Chaix-Constantin

International Alliance of Women: Miss Clara Campamor, Miss Marie Ginsberg

International Association of Penal Law: Mrs. Hélène Romnicio

International Catholic Child Bureau: Miss Renée de Lucy Fossarieu

International Committee of the Red Cross: Miss Anny Pürter

International Council of Women: Miss Louise C. A. Van Eeghen, Mrs. Mabel Jackson-Haight, Mrs. Esther Hymer, Mme. Magdeleine Leroy

International Federation "Amies de la Jeune Fille": Mrs. Katharine Wood

International Federation of Business and Professional Women: Mrs. Corrie van den Bos, Miss Daphne Chapman, Miss Elisabeth Feller, Mrs. Martha C. de Greyerz, Mrs. Elva B. M. Wanell-Holmgren

International Federation of University Women: Miss Renée J. Dubois, Mrs. Marie Fiechter, Mrs. Marguerite Henrici, Miss Irene Hilton, Miss Rosaleen Mills, Miss Felicia Stallman

International Federation of Women Lawyers: Lady Gladys T. Chatterjee, Mrs. Delfina Donelli Capelli, Mrs. Aiko Noda, Miss Herminia Ruiz Ovalar, Miss A. Viola Smith, Mrs. Hildegard Wolle-Egenolf.

International League for the Rights of Man: Mrs. Hélène Romnicio, Mrs. Hildegard Wolle-Egenolf

International Movement for Fraternal Union among Races and Peoples: Mrs. Eva Beaud, Mrs. Anne-Marie Pivot

International Union for Child Welfare: Miss Audrey Moser, Mrs. Jeanne-Marie Small

Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations: Lady Nunburnholme, Mrs. Alice Wible

Pan Pacific South-east Asia Women's Association: Mrs. Constance Jones

Pax Romana: Miss Madeleine du Fresne, Mr. Tadeusz Szmitkowski

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom: Miss Gertrude Baer, Mrs. Madeleine Bouchereau

World Federation of Catholic Young Women and Girls: Miss Léone Herren

World Movement of Mothers: Mrs. Monique de Vaublanc

World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations: Dr. Marie-Thérèse Graber-Duvernay, Miss Agnès de Kalbermatten

World Young Women's Christian Association: Miss Alice Arnold, The Hon. Isabel Catto, Miss Jacqueline van Stoetwegen

World's Women's Christian Temperance Union: Mrs. Noëlle Chaix-Constantin, Mrs. Yvonne Leuba

Young Christian Workers: Mlle. Madeleine Dessibourg

REGISTER

International Council of Social Democratic Women: Mrs. Nina Andersen

Open Door International: Miss Gertrude Baer

St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance: Miss Marie-Isabelle Archinard, Miss Phyllis C. Chaloner

World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts: Mrs. Perle Bugnion-Secretan

World Federation for Mental Health: Dr. Anne Audéoud-Naville

World Federation of Democratic Youth: Mrs. Dagmar Molkova

3. Mrs. Mary Tenison-Woods, Chief of the Section on the Status of Women, represented the Secretary-General; Mrs. Sophie Grinberg-Vinaver acted as Secretary to the Commission.

Election of officers

4. The Commission at its 258th meeting unanimously elected the following officers:
 Begum Anwar Ahmed (Pakistan), *Chairman*
 Miss Uldarica Mañas (Cuba), *First Vice-Chairman*
 Mrs. Dembinska (Poland) Zofia, *Second Vice-Chairman*
 Mrs. Mina Ben-Zvi (Israel), *Rapporteur*

Committees

5. In order to expedite its work, the Commission at its 260th meeting established two *ad hoc* committees as follows:

Committee on Resolutions: The Committee was composed of representatives of the Dominican Republic, France (Chairman), Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

Committee on Communications: The Committee was composed of representatives of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Japan, Mexico, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Chairman).

Representation of China

6. At the 258th meeting, the representative of the USSR protested against the absence of any representative of the People's Republic of China, whose place, she contended, was illegally occupied by a person who had no right to represent China. This view was supported by the representatives of Czechoslovakia and Poland. The representative of China stated that she represented the only legal Government of China, and pointed out that the Commission on the Status of Women was not competent to take any action in the matter. This view was supported by the representative of the United States of America. It was agreed that the views expressed would be included in the records of the session.

Meetings, resolutions and documentation

7. The Commission held twenty-seven plenary meetings. The views expressed at those meetings are summarized in the records of the 258th to 284th meetings.

8. The resolutions and decisions of the Commission appear under the subject-matters to which they relate. The draft resolutions submitted for consideration by the Economic and Social Council are set out in chapter XVI of the present report.

9. The documents before the Commission at its twelfth session are listed in the annex to this report.

Agenda

10. The Commission considered its agenda at its 258th meeting, and had before it the provisional agenda (E/CN.6/314) drawn up by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission.

11. The Commission accepted unanimously the suggestion of the Chairman to reverse the position of items

5 and 8 of the provisional agenda. It also unanimously accepted the suggestion of the representative of the Dominican Republic that the order of item 13 of the provisional agenda, dealing with the periodicity of the sessions of the Commission, and that of item 10 be reversed. The representative of the Dominican Republic proposed also that an item entitled "Participation of women in the work of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies" be added to the agenda. The Commission unanimously accepted that proposal.

12. At its 258th meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted its agenda as amended. The agenda in its final form (E/CN.6/314/Rev.1) was as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Political rights of women:
 - (a) Annual memorandum on political rights of women;
 - (b) Report on the status of women in Trust Territories;
 - (c) Report on the status of women in Non-Self-Governing Territories.
4. Access of women to education:
 - (a) Report on the access of women to higher education;
 - (b) Note on the access of women to secondary education;
 - (c) Progress report on the activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 1957 of special interest to women.
5. Status of women in private law: report on consent to marriage and age of marriage.
6. Economic opportunities for women:
 - (a) Report on working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities;
 - (b) Report on the situation of working women with family responsibilities;
 - (c) Report on the right to rest and the right to material security in case of old age, illness or loss of capacity to work;
7. Nationality of married women: report containing information on recent changes in legislation affecting the nationality of married women.
8. Equal pay for equal work:
 - (a) Progress report on the implementation by Governments of the principle of equal pay for equal work;
 - (b) Draft pamphlet on equal pay for equal work.
9. Technical assistance and advisory services programmes in relation to the status of women:
 - (a) Report on technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women;
 - (b) Progress report on advisory services in the field of human rights in relation to the status of women;
 - (c) Note concerning an international seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life.
10. Periodicity of the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women: Note on the periodicity of the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women.
11. Report of the Inter-American Commission of Women.
12. Communications concerning the status of women.
13. Report of the representative of the Commission on the Status of Women to the thirteenth session of the Commission on Human Rights and to the tenth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.
14. Participation of women in the work of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies.
15. Review of the programme of work and establishment of priorities:
 - (a) Note on the review of the programme of work and the establishment of priorities;
 - (b) Note on the pattern of conferences.
16. Adoption of the report to the Economic and Social Council.

II. POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

13. The Commission considered item 3 of its agenda at its 259th, 260th, 263rd and 265th meetings. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General on constitutions, electoral laws and other legal instruments relating to the political rights of women (A/3627 and Corr.1); it also had before it reports by the Secretary-General on the status of women in Trust Territories (E/CN.6/319) and in Non-Self-Governing Territories (E/CN.6/318).

14. In the course of the general debate on this item, the Commission reviewed the progress achieved towards recognition of political rights for women. The fact that some sovereign States had not yet granted women any political rights was noted with concern by several members of the Commission. On the other hand, it was indicated that in a number of countries where these rights were granted to women there existed major obstacles in the way of the actual exercise of these rights.

15. One of the important tasks remaining was the education of women in the use of their political rights.

Only by accepting duties of citizenship and by participating actively in public affairs could women make full use of the right of suffrage in the countries where this right has already been accorded to them. By refusing to join the political parties in their respective countries, women were foregoing opportunities for political education and experience, renouncing their political responsibilities, and so failing to assume the active part which they ought to play in their respective countries. The problem was further complicated by the ties that existed between the access to public office and the problem of access to economic rights.

16. It was noted with regret that the number of States which had signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women was very low as compared with the number of States in which women had the right to vote and were eligible for election to legislative bodies. Several members felt that the reason for this discrepancy may reside in article III of the Convention which deals with public offices and functions, inasmuch as in a large number of countries women do

not have equal access with men to such offices and functions, either in law or in fact.

17. It was stated that many people are surprised to learn of the existence of certain discriminatory practices against women in regard to access to public offices, rules governing promotion, conditions of career services and retirement and pension rights not only in other countries but actually in their own; The Commission, as the body charged with the duty of upholding the social and legal status of women, should take note of what still remained to be done in the extremely wide field of public office. What was needed were means of improving the conditions of implementation at the local and national level in such a way as to enable the rate of ratification of and accession to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women to be accelerated. The consensus of opinion in the Commission was that the most important aspect of political rights to be studied by the Commission at present was the access of women to public offices and functions, and the conditions under which they are exercising them.

18. One member recalled that several years ago the Commission had undertaken a study of the access of women to public services and functions (E/CN.6/158 and Addenda), but that this information had not been brought up to date. She felt that Governments as well as non-governmental organizations should be asked to inform the Commission of the present status of the question in the various countries of the world. Several members of the Commission supported this suggestion.

19. Other members of the Commission felt that the factual situation with respect to access of women to public services and functions was even more important than the legal aspect of the question: as long as women have access only to secondary positions in the governments and administrations of their countries there would be no equality in their participation in the government of their countries. They advocated a request to States for information concerning the numbers of women holding responsible positions in the various branches of government.

20. Some members drew attention to the fact that, as indicated in the reports on the status of women in dependent territories, a certain progress had been made, but only education, whether political, general or merely fundamental, could bring home to the women of these territories the need to acquire and use political rights. It was emphasized that an excellent method which has proved helpful in encouraging women to use their political rights was the holding of regional seminars. As pointed out in the report on the Bangkok seminar,¹ civic rights and duties do not consist solely in voting or in standing for election, but also in actually assuming political and other civic responsibilities at all levels. The report also called attention to the importance of voluntary organizations as a training ground for equipping women for participation in public life.

21. The hope was expressed that seminars on civic education and increased participation of women in public and political life would be held frequently in the future under the auspices of the United Nations. It was by taking an active part in public life at the local level that women obtained the experience which would allow them later on to fill more important posts. To that end the Commission should make use of all the means at its dis-

¹1957 Seminar on the Civic Responsibilities and Increased Participation of Asian Women in Public Life (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1957.IV.10).

posal, such as the preparation and sale of pamphlets, the publication of surveys and reports, and above all, the organization of seminars.

22. In the course of its discussion, the Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Alliance of Women and the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women and the International Federation of Women Lawyers.

23. The representatives of Cuba, France, Israel, Sweden and Venezuela submitted a joint draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.237), the three operative paragraphs of which read as follows:

"1. *Decides* to bring up to date its study of the access of women to and the exercise by them of public services and functions (E/CN.6/158 and addenda);

"2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to circulate to Governments of Member States and to non-governmental organizations in consultative status, chapter I of the document above referred to, and to invite them to transmit to him such new or supplementary information as may be necessary to bring the study up to date.

"3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare, if possible for the fourteenth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, a report based on information received from Governments and from non-governmental organizations."

24. After a discussion of this text in the Commission, the sponsors of the draft resolution, with the addition of the representative of Poland, submitted a revised draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.237/Rev.1).

25. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland submitted an oral amendment which would delete the paragraphs referring the draft resolution to the Economic and Social Council, making it a resolution addressed by the Commission directly to the Secretary-General. The representative of the Dominican Republic also proposed orally that the words "in eleven countries" in the third paragraph of the preamble should be replaced by the words "in some countries". Both amendments were accepted by the sponsors of the draft resolution. Certain drafting amendments suggested by the representatives of Cuba, the Dominican Republic and the United States of America were also accepted.

26. Separate votes were taken on various parts of the draft resolution at the request of several representatives. The words: "*Deploring* the fact" in the third paragraph of the preamble were adopted by 14 votes to 1, with 1 abstention. The last paragraph of the preamble beginning with the words "*Being concerned*" was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 2 abstentions. The preamble as a whole was adopted unanimously. The operative part of the draft resolution was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 1 abstention. The draft resolution, as amended (E/CN.6/L.238), was adopted as a whole unanimously. The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 1 (XII)

POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling that the principle of equal rights of men and women has been included in the Charter of the United Nations as one of the aims of the peoples of the United Nations,

Recalling also article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and General Assembly resolution 56 (I) of 11 December 1946,

Deploring the fact that, in some countries, women have not yet been granted any political rights,

Considering that it is essential that women be granted equality in the access to, and in the exercise of, all public services and functions,

Believing that the Convention on the Political Rights of Women constitutes an important instrument for the implementation of the principle of equality of women in the field of political rights,

Being concerned that, although women have been granted the right to vote and to be elected to legislative bodies in some seventy countries, the Convention has obtained only forty-one signatures and twenty-nine rati-

fications and accessions since it was opened for signature, ratification and accession by States in March 1953,

1. *Decides* to bring up to date its study of the access of women to and the exercise by them of public services and functions (E/CN.6/158 and addenda);

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to circulate to Governments of Member States and to non-governmental organizations in consultative status, chapter I of the document above referred to, and to invite them to transmit to him such new or supplementary information as may be necessary to bring the study up to date.

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare, if possible for the fourteenth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, a report based on information received from Governments and from non-governmental organizations.

III. ACCESS OF WOMEN TO EDUCATION

27. The Commission considered item 4 of its agenda at its 261st, 262nd, 263rd and 265th meetings. The Commission had before it a report prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in collaboration with the International Federation of University Women (E/CN.6/327) concerning the access of women to higher education. The Commission also had before it a note by UNESCO (E/CN.6/328) concerning the access of women to secondary education and presenting a UNESCO publication entitled *Current School Enrolment Statistics: No. 4*. A report prepared by UNESCO concerning UNESCO activities in 1957 of special interest to women (E/CN.6/320) was also before the Commission. In addition, a number of UNESCO printed publications, dealing with such subjects as a statistical study of illiteracy in the world, expansion of school facilities, teacher training and school curricula, were made available to the members of the Commission. The Commission also had before it a statement by the Catholic International Union for Social Service (E/CN.6/NGO/52).

28. The Commission heard the representative of UNESCO, who presented the reports prepared by her organization and reviewed the aspects of the work undertaken by UNESCO in 1957 which were of particular interest to the Commission on the Status of Women. In this connexion, she noted that the Director-General of UNESCO had informed the UNESCO Executive Board at its forty-eighth session of his intention to prepare a co-ordinated programme relating particularly to the education of women for 1959-1960. The UNESCO representative stated that a woman consultant had been invited to prepare suggestions in collaboration with the UNESCO secretariat concerning such a programme. The draft programme elaborated on the basis of these suggestions will be presented to the forthcoming fiftieth session of the UNESCO Executive Board in April 1958 and to the Tenth General Conference of UNESCO in November 1958. The representative of UNESCO noted that the main purpose of this draft programme was the provision of continued help towards the solution of the problems of discrimination and inequality of opportunity in the field of education of girls and women. She also noted that the problems of the countries of Asia and Africa had been taken into account in the preparation of the draft programme with respect to the access of women to education.

29. In a later intervention, the UNESCO representative emphasized that all the statistical data given in the report on access of women to higher education were based on the official statistics which were available to the UNESCO secretariat, and she stated that the attention of the appropriate services would be drawn to the comments of representatives concerning the arrangement of the statistics in this report.

30. The representative of UNESCO outlined the proposed pattern of reports which her organization would undertake to prepare for future sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, and she stated that UNESCO proposed to prepare a study on the access of women to the teaching profession for the thirteenth session of the Commission, which would be followed by a report on the access of women to out-of-school education for the fourteenth session of the Commission.

31. She expressed the hope that UNESCO's work in this field would continue to benefit from the close collaboration of the Commission on the Status of Women and of its individual members.

32. In the course of the general debate, members of the Commission discussed the various reports prepared for its consideration by UNESCO. Particular interest was expressed in those activities of UNESCO which were of special interest to women, and, in this connexion, several members emphasized the importance of the major project on the extension of primary education in Latin America to the development of primary education in that area. Several members also stressed the importance of the international seminars, the exchange of persons programme and the public information activities carried out by UNESCO, and they noted the close relationship that existed between the fundamental and adult education programmes and the training of both men and women to the fullest possible understanding of their civic responsibilities.

33. Replying to a question by one of the members of the Commission, the representative of UNESCO indicated that her organization could make available to the Commission future issues of the publication entitled *Current School Enrolment Statistics*, so that the members of the Commission could be informed as to progress and developments in this field.

34. The Commission's debate on this item of its agenda was, in the main, focused on the report prepared by UNESCO in collaboration with the International

Federation of University Women concerning the access of women to higher education (E/CN.6/327). All the members of the Commission participating in the debate expressed their appreciation for the work undertaken by UNESCO and by the International Federation of University Women in preparing this report, and felt that the report itself provided the basis for the future work undertaken by UNESCO and by the Commission on the Status of Women in increasing women's opportunities for achieving higher education. Members of the Commission felt that the statistics contained in the annexes to the report indicated that considerable progress had been made towards the elimination of discrimination, although it was noted that these statistics could not, in every instance, be considered to be strictly comparable. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to incorporate into the body of the report the information contained in annex 2 concerning opportunities for women for higher education in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; the information contained in this annex had been received too late for inclusion in the over-all survey.

35. In discussing the substantive aspects of the report concerning the access of women to higher education, Commission members stressed the importance of the contribution which can be made by highly educated women to the life of the community, and they emphasized the importance of the role of educated women as citizens and as members of the family unit. Several members pointed out that married women who have enjoyed the advantage of higher education are able to carry out their family responsibilities with more understanding than women who have not had the advantage of advanced training, and these members stated that every effort should be made to enable highly educated women to use their training to the fullest possible extent in practice.

36. It was noted that, in many countries, women themselves do not take the fullest advantage of the educational possibilities open to them. It was felt that prejudice and traditional attitudes restricted the access of women to higher education to a considerable degree, even in some countries which were otherwise considered to be advanced in their economic and social development. Several members stated that the access of women to higher education was also limited by economic and social factors, and these members expressed the view that Governments and local governmental authorities should be wholly responsible for the organization and financing of the school system. Other members noted that the assistance which had been provided by industrial establishments, private foundations, labour unions, alumni associations and other non-governmental organizations in the granting of scholarships and study grants had proved to be an important factor in extending the opportunities opened to women for achieving higher degrees.

37. One member stressed the particular problem confronting women in economically less advanced countries in their efforts to attain higher education, and she felt that particular attention should be given to the problems of these areas in planning international programmes and in developing national plans for the advancement of education.

38. During the course of the debate, members of the Commission repeatedly emphasized the necessity for providing a sound foundation for higher education at the primary and secondary levels of instruction, and stressed the need for increasing the number of trained teachers at all levels of the educational system. In this

connexion, one member also outlined the advantage to both boys and girls of a co-educational school system.

39. In discussing the recommendations contained in the report on the access of women to higher education, members of the Commission felt that adequate vocational guidance was of the utmost importance in enabling women and girls to take advantage of the educational opportunities open to them and to plan their future life by taking into account their natural abilities, aptitudes and inclinations. In this connexion, it was noted that in many countries both girls and their parents were often unwilling that an extended professional training should be undertaken on the grounds that marriage and family responsibilities would intervene before the expenses involved in such a training had been justified by financial and professional returns. Members of the Commission repeatedly stressed the advantage which could be derived by the community, the family unit and the individual woman from utilizing her abilities and intellectual capacities to the fullest possible extent.

40. Members of the Commission also emphasized that girls should be encouraged to undertake training in technical and scientific fields and not to limit their choice of profession to fields traditionally considered to be particularly suitable for women. It was pointed out that considerable opportunities for employment existed for girls and women trained in technical and scientific fields, and one member felt that particular attention should be given to assuring that women trained in these fields would be able to obtain suitable employment.

41. In discussing the methods by which the recommendations contained in the report could be carried out, several members of the Commission paid a tribute to the valuable work which had been done in this field by UNESCO and by non-governmental organizations. The Commission felt that Governments should be encouraged by every possible means to take the necessary measures to enable all members of the community, both men and women, to have full access to education at primary, secondary and higher levels. The Commission also felt that Governments should encourage girls and women to make the fullest possible use of their intellectual capacities and abilities in the choice of their future training, by increasing the number of scholarships and study grants and by encouraging increased flexibility in the requirements laid down for achieving higher degrees. The Commission also felt that Governments should undertake, wherever necessary, national studies on the status of higher education for women, so as to discover and to eliminate any remaining obstacles to the access of women to such education.

42. In conclusion, the Commission noted with deep appreciation the work done by UNESCO and by the International Federation of University Women. The Commission endorsed the programme of reports outlined by the representative of UNESCO which would be presented to its future sessions, and expressed deep interest in the proposed UNESCO programme concerning the access of women to education.

43. During the course of the debate, the Commission heard statements by the representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions, the Catholic International Union for Social Service, the International Alliance of Women, the International Association of Penal Law, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Federation of University Women and the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

IV. STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW

44. The Commission considered item 5 of its agenda at its 264th, 265th, 267th, 270th, 271st, 272nd, and 275th meetings. It had before it a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/317 and Corr.1 and Add.1) on consent to marriage and age of marriage. The Commission also had before it statements by the Catholic International Union for Social Service (E/CN.6/NGO/55), The International Federation of Women Lawyers (E/CN.6/NGO/56), and the St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance (E/CN.6/NGO/48).

45. During the debate it was agreed that the situation with respect to consent of the parties to the marriage and the minimum age of marriage was still far from satisfactory in many regions of the world. Some members of the Commission felt that, in order to improve this situation, it was necessary to start by influencing public opinion through the education of peoples whose traditions and customs were deeply involved in their concept of marriage. Other representatives thought that legislation was necessary in order to hasten the process and prevent young girls from being married before they reached physical and mental maturity.

46. Several members expressed the view that the Commission should take action in the matter without delay, and advocated an international convention on the minimum age of marriage. They felt that the report of the Secretary-General contained sufficient information concerning minimum ages of marriage to enable the Commission to take a definite stand on the matter; a draft prepared by the Secretary-General for the thirteenth session of the Commission would, in their opinion, be the first step in the elaboration of a convention, a process which could take some years, as happened in the case of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women and the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women.

47. Other members, while supporting this stand, felt that the proposed convention should deal not only with the age of marriage but also with the free consent of both parties and the compulsory registration of marriages, without which the provision of a minimum age of marriage would have little effect, the three questions being closely linked together. Other representatives noted that the information contained in the report before them was not exhaustive, and felt that the Secretary-General should be asked to obtain from Governments and non-governmental organizations more extensive information, and to prepare a comprehensive study of the subject for the fourteenth session of the Commission, based on the information received. Some, among these members, stated that the Commission should have an opportunity to study the supplementary information obtained by the Secretary-General before asking him to prepare a draft convention.

48. During the general debate, the Commission heard statements by representatives of the Catholic International Union for Social Services, the International Alliance of Women, the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Women Lawyers and the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

49. The representatives of Cuba, France and Poland submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.239) requesting the Secretary-General to prepare for the consideration of the Commission at its thirteenth session, a draft convention establishing a minimum age of marriage.

50. The representatives of China, the Dominican Re-

public, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Venezuela presented another draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.240) requesting the Economic and Social Council to adopt a draft resolution containing a request to the Secretary-General to obtain information from Governments and non-governmental organizations concerning consent to marriage and requirements as to age and registration of marriage, and to prepare, for the fourteenth session of the Commission, a report based on this additional information.

51. During the discussion of these draft resolutions, several representatives, supporting the three-power draft resolution, made oral amendments suggesting that the international instrument to be prepared under the auspices of the United Nations should cover, not only the minimum age of marriage, but also the requirement of free consent to marriage and registration of marriage. The original sponsors of the draft accepted these amendments and submitted a revised draft resolution (E/CN.6/L/239/Rev.1) by which the Secretary-General was requested to prepare for the thirteenth session of the Commission a draft convention establishing: (a) a minimum age of marriage, (b) the requirement of the free consent of both parties to the marriage, and (c) the compulsory registration of marriages.

52. Proposals were made by several representatives with a view to merging both draft resolutions. The two draft resolutions were referred to the Committee on Resolutions. The Committee adopted a text (E/CN.6/L.245) which was presented to the Commission.

53. During the discussion of this new draft, one of the representatives suggested that the Secretary-General be asked to prepare the draft convention for the fifteenth session of the Commission, instead of the fourteenth session, as was proposed in the operative part of the draft resolution. Other members were of the opinion that the Commission would be assisted by having before it as much information as possible when it considers the draft convention prepared by the Secretary-General.

54. The representative of the United Kingdom stated that she would support the draft resolution on the understanding that the draft convention to be prepared by the Secretary-General would be limited to substantive clauses; the United Kingdom would have to reserve its position on the final and formal clauses, a position which would be influenced by the absence or otherwise of a territorial application clause.

55. The representative of the Dominican Republic asked for separate votes on different parts of paragraph 4 of the operative part and on operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. The representative of Belgium asked for a separate vote on the phrase "preferably of not less than sixteen years" in operative paragraph 4. The draft resolution was put to the vote as follows: the preamble and operative paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 were adopted unanimously. Paragraph 4 of the operative part was voted on in four parts, as follows: the phrase "Considers that it may be appropriate to prescribe desirable standards in this field" was adopted unanimously; the phrase "by means of an international instrument under the auspices of the United Nations" was adopted by 15 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions; the phrase "preferably of not less than sixteen years" was adopted by 13 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions; the last part of operative paragraph 4, from the words "which would establish" to the end of the paragraph, was adopted by 15 votes to 1,

with 2 abstentions. Paragraph 5 of the operative part was adopted by 13 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

56. The draft resolution as a whole was adopted at the 275th meeting of the Commission by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions. The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 2 (XII)

AGE OF MARRIAGE, FREE CONSENT, AND REGISTRATION
OF MARRIAGES

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, General Assembly resolution 843 (IX) of 17 December 1954 and Economic and Social Council resolution 652 G (XXIV) of 24 July 1957, as well as article 2 of the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices similar to Slavery,

Having considered the report by the Secretary-General on the consent to marriage and age of marriage (E/CN.6/317 and Corr.1 and Add.1) and having noted that, in his introduction to that report, the Secretary-General states that the sources of information which were at his disposal were not exhaustive,

Believing that further information in this field will prove helpful to assure protection for women and the family,

Recommends that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following draft resolution: . . .

[For the text of the draft resolution, see chapter XVI, draft resolution B I.]

57. Several members expressed their appreciation to the Secretary-General for the excellent publication entitled *Legal Status of Married Women*,² which constituted a valuable handbook on the subject for all working for the promotion of equal rights for women in the field of family law and property rights. One member expressed the hope that the publication would be enlarged

² United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1957.IV.8.

V. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

62. The Commission discussed item 6 of its agenda at its 268th to 271st and 273rd to 276th meetings. It had before it a report by the Secretary-General concerning working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities (E/CN.6/324), as well as a report prepared by the International Labour Office on the situation of working women with family responsibilities (E/CN.6/329). In addition, the Commission had before it a report prepared by the International Labour Office concerning the right to rest and the right to material security in case of old age, illness or loss of capacity to work (E/CN.6/323), and a report by the Secretary-General concerning age of retirement and right to pension (E/CN.6/321). The Commission also had before it statements by the Catholic International Union for Social Service (E/CN.6/NGO/50 and 51), the International Catholic Child Bureau (E/CN.6/NGO/57 and Corr.1) and the Open Door International (E/CN.6/NGO/53).

**Working women, including working mothers,
with family responsibilities**

63. The situation of working women, including work-

ing mothers, with family responsibilities, and means for the improvement of their position, was discussed by the Commission at its 268th, 269th, 270th and 274th meetings.

64. The representative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) expressed the view that consideration of the situation of working women with family responsibilities should include an analysis of relevant legislation and regulations, and also the pertinent provisions of collective bargaining agreements. The ILO representative emphasized that the increasing number of women with family responsibilities in the labour market in many countries was due in large measure to the rapid process of industrialization. She noted that women with family responsibilities had previously only been drawn into the labour force during periods of labour shortage, but that in a great number of countries women with such responsibilities could no longer be considered as a marginal factor in the composition of the labour force.

58. At its 266th (closed) meeting, the Commission discussed the question of certain ritual practices affecting the physical integrity of young girls in some areas of the world. It heard representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) who answered questions put to them by members of the Commission.

59. At its 271st meeting, the Commission considered a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.241) submitted by the representatives of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, France, Sweden and the United Kingdom, containing a draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, by which the Council would request WHO to undertake an inquiry concerning these ritual practices and to communicate the results of this inquiry to the Commission on the Status of Women.

60. The representative of WHO suggested that it would be preferable to request a preliminary study on the feasibility of such an inquiry, since it would involve the co-operation of Governments as well as budgetary implications and staffing problems. Members of the Commission felt strongly, however, that the inquiry was already overdue and that no further delay should be incurred.

61. The draft resolution was adopted unanimously at the 271st meeting of the Commission. The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 3 (XII)

RITUAL OPERATIONS

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 445 C (XIV) of 28 May 1952, Trusteeship Council resolution 865 (XII) of 13 July 1953, and General Assembly resolution 843 (IX) of 17 December 1954,

Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . .

[For the text of the draft resolution, see chapter XVI, draft resolution B II.]

65. The ILO representative also noted that the gradual tendency towards shortening both daily working hours and the working week was of considerable importance to the consideration of the situation of these women,

and she expressed the view that the entire question required further study in the future.

66. In a later intervention, made in connexion with the revised draft resolution (see paras. 79 and 80 below), the ILO representative referred to the programme of the International Children's Centre with respect to the proposed inquiry into crèches and day nurseries, and she drew attention to the assistance available to Governments through the technical assistance programmes of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies which could be utilized to improve the situation of working women with family responsibilities.

67. During the course of the debate, members of the Commission expressed their appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the ILO for the reports prepared on this subject, and to the non-governmental organizations which had co-operated with the Secretary-General by forwarding information concerning the situation of working women with family responsibilities. Members of the Commission repeatedly emphasized the dual responsibility of working women with family responsibilities involving the care of the home and the welfare of the family in addition to the duties of their employment. It was felt that the tendency apparent in many countries towards a low age of marriage, and the universal tendency to a longer life expectancy, increased the importance of women's contribution to the national economy and to the life of the community, and that the problems confronting working women with family responsibilities were questions of deep concern to the community as a whole. Several members of the Commission felt that special attention should be given to the particular problems confronting working women who had the sole responsibility for providing for all members of their family.

68. In discussing the long hours of work entailed by the combination of employment and home responsibilities, several members of the Commission expressed the view that technical progress would tend to decrease working hours for all workers, including working women with family responsibilities, and would therefore make it easier for women in this category to fulfill their various tasks.

69. Several members felt that part-time work was particularly suited to women with family responsibilities. Others expressed the view that relatively few women were prepared to undertake such employment. Still other members felt that the extension of part-time work could be used to disguise unemployment or under-employment, and that the extension of part-time employment would have a bad effect on the achievement of equality of pay, pensions and general economic opportunities for women.

70. In discussing various measures designed to lighten the burden of housework for working women with family responsibilities, several members of the Commission felt that it would be highly desirable to make modern conveniences more readily available in the home. In this connexion, members mentioned the importance of electricity, water supply and modern housing, and the advisability of a rational arrangement of household work by the housewife herself was repeatedly emphasized.

71. Members of the Commission also stressed the need for making more community facilities available for working women on a co-operative basis, and they noted that in many countries shops and other services remained open to enable working women to do their necessary marketing. It was felt that, although progress had been made in many countries towards lessening the burden of housework to a great extent, considerable

scope still existed for improvement in many areas. The Commission felt that the growing tendency for all members of the family to help in household tasks should be encouraged, and that an understanding and co-operative attitude on the part of the husband was of the utmost importance in this respect. It was also stated that boys and girls should be taught that the care of the home was not the exclusive responsibility of wives or mothers.

72. During the discussion about the health and welfare of children of working mothers, members of the Commission paid particular attention to the importance of paid maternity leave and to the extension of relevant social security provisions and of maternity insurance. In this connexion, one member drew attention to ILO Convention (No. 103) concerning Maternity Protection (Revised 1952), and expressed the hope that more countries would ratify this Convention in the near future. Another member expressed a preference for legislative measures dealing with maternity leave, since she felt that the incorporation of such provisions in collective bargaining agreements entailed constant effort on the part of women workers and trade unions.

73. Members of the Commission also described the various measures taken in their countries to care for the children of working mothers, and special attention was drawn to the problem of caring for school age children after school hours. It was felt that there was a widespread need in many countries for more day-care centres and similar institutions, and that the location and staffing of these centres should be undertaken with the utmost care.

74. Members of the Commission discussed the activities undertaken for the care of children by national and local government authorities and by private organizations, and one member felt that the establishment of crèches and similar facilities in factories and other places of employment tended to increase labour immobility.

75. The possible effects on the health and psychological well-being of the family caused by the employment of women with family responsibilities were considered, and several members of the Commission felt that health and morale could, in many cases, be said to have improved when such women undertook paid employment. It was also noted that the effects of the employment of the mother on the well-being of her family were largely determined by her character and competence.

76. Members of the Commission felt that the problems of working women with family responsibilities should be the object of special concern on the part of national and local governments as well as of non-governmental and international organizations, since the well-being of the community was, to a large measure, dependent on such action. In this connexion one member stressed the particular problems confronting working women with family responsibilities in countries with predominantly agricultural economies.

77. During the debate, several members recalled the specific terms of reference of the Commission on the Status of Women as set forth in Economic and Social Council resolution 48 (IV), and they noted that other organs of the United Nations, as well as several specialized agencies, were undertaking studies and other activities closely connected with various aspects of this question. Several members also felt that it would be difficult for the Commission to promote special measures in favour of working women with family responsibilities when the Commission's primary concern was the achievement of equality as between men and women. Other

members of the Commission, however, felt that the particular situation of working women with family responsibilities required special measures in the interest of the community as a whole, and that encouragement of the adoption of such measures was not incompatible with the Commission's terms of reference.

78. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the Catholic International Union for Social Service, the International Alliance of Women, the International Association of Penal Law, the International Union for Child Welfare, the World Movement of Mothers, the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, the World Young Women's Christian Association, the Open Door International and St. Joan's International Social and Political Alliance.

79. The representatives of Poland and the United States tabled a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.242). In the light of the general debate, the sponsors submitted a revised text (E/CN.6/L.242/Rev.1), the operative part of which read as follows:

"1. *Takes note* of the important information contained in the reports submitted to the Commission by the Secretary-General and by the International Labour Organisation;

"2. *Expresses* its gratitude to the non-governmental organizations in consultative status for their co-operation and requests them to continue their efforts to enlighten public opinion on this important matter;

"3. *Requests* the specialized agencies to give sympathetic consideration to any request for help submitted to them in connexion with assistance to working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities, and to report to the Commission on the Status of Women on the services so rendered;

"4. *Stresses* the importance of the inquiry undertaken by the International Children's Centre on crèches and day nurseries, and expresses the wish that the results of that inquiry may be communicated to the Commission on the Status of Women at one of its next sessions."

This revised text was considered by the Commission at its 274th meeting. The representative of Sweden joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution. The representative of Canada proposed an oral amendment calling for the addition of a final paragraph to the preamble which was accepted by the three sponsors. The representatives of Poland and Sweden proposed drafting changes, and the representative of Poland proposed the addition of another paragraph between paragraphs 2 and 3 of the operative part: all of the suggestions were accepted by the other sponsors.

80. In reply to a question put by the representative of Poland, the Chief of the European office of the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration described the organization, functions and programme of the International Children's Centre. The Commission noted that the result of the inquiry to be undertaken by the Centre would be brought to the attention of the members of the Commission, and that the substance of this inquiry would then be discussed only in so far as it was of direct concern to the situation of working women with family responsibilities.

81. At its 274th meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted the draft resolution as amended (E/CN.6/L.247). The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 4 (XII)

WORKING WOMEN, INCLUDING WORKING MOTHERS, WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Commission on the Status of Women
Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . .

[*For the text of the draft resolution, see chapter XVI, draft resolution C I.*]

Right to rest and right to material security

82. The Commission discussed the right to rest and the right to material security in case of old age, illness or loss of capacity to work, at its 271st and 273rd meetings.

83. The representative of the ILO drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that the report drawn up by her organization on this subject (E/CN.6/323 and Corr.1) had been prepared, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 625 B III (XXII) on the removal of economic discrimination against women, as one of the aspects of the economic rights mentioned in that resolution.

84. With respect to the right to rest, the ILO representative noted that a considerable body of legislation on this subject had evolved during the past fifty years, and that in many countries the first step towards such legislation had been the adoption of measures designed to prevent the exploitation of women workers. She noted that the length of the average working day, week and year in any given country varied according to the degree of economic and social development, and that differences also occurred as between industries and occupations in the same country. The ILO representative also stated that, in spite of a tendency in many countries to extend the coverage of collective bargaining agreements and other instruments to as many workers as possible, many categories of workers, such as agricultural and domestic workers, nurses and hotel employees, where women are numerically important, were not covered by agreements or regulations dealing with the right to rest. She noted that in such cases women were not made the object of discriminatory measures, since men workers in these activities did not receive a better treatment.

85. In discussing the question of the desirability of protective measures in favour of women, the ILO representative stated that the major consideration was the realistic appraisal of the special needs and problems of working women, and that measures designed to meet these needs should not jeopardize employment opportunities for women, or endanger their equal status with men in the employment market.

86. The ILO representative described the evolution of social security systems in connexion with the right to material security, in case of illness, old age and loss of capacity to work, and noted that differences were apparent in the social security systems of many countries with respect to the benefits enjoyed by men and by women. She expressed the view that technological advances might contribute considerably to the lowering of the retirement age for all workers. The representative of

the ILO also outlined the various measures taken, and the action contemplated by her organization, in connexion with the right to rest and to material security.

87. During the general debate, members of the Commission expressed their appreciation of the ILO report on this subject; one member noted that the examination of this report provided the Commission with the opportunity to discuss women's hours of employment for the first time.

88. Several members of the Commission emphasized the importance of the conclusion contained in the ILO report, which had stated that an excessive number of ill-directed measures regulating women's work have a harmful effect on women's chances of finding employment, and that the total absence of such measures deprives them of the safeguards to which they are entitled. These members felt that legislation and other measures taken with respect to the right to rest and the right to material security should be taken with the interest of all workers in mind, but they felt, however, that special attention should be paid to the particular problems of working women with family responsibilities.

89. One member expressed the view that protective measures concerning women's employment involved a degree of guardianship which was well intentioned but tended to be obsolete. She felt that some protective measures, such as those relating to night work, should be enforced for both men and women, and she noted that large numbers of women were engaged in non-industrial areas of employment which were in many countries specifically excluded from the scope of protective laws and regulations. This member expressed the hope that the increasing numbers of women in national legislatures would be in a position both to further the abolition of protective measures for women and to influence public opinion. In this connexion, she noted that the removal of protective legislation would not mean that women would engage in dangerous occupations.

90. One member felt that a properly balanced approach with respect to the working conditions of women could be achieved by careful consideration of the situation of working women in each national economy, and she noted that greater numbers of women still tended to be employed in unskilled trades where the organization of trade unions was not sufficiently advanced. This member stressed the importance of the adoption of legislation establishing minimum standards with regard to the right to rest, and she emphasized the importance of collective bargaining agreements establishing daily working hours, the length of the working week and the right to holidays with pay. In this connexion, several members emphasized the importance of encouraging the increased participation of women workers in trade unions.

91. In discussing the right to material security in case of old age, illness or loss of capacity to work, some of the members of the Commission outlined the relevant provisions of legislation adopted in their respective countries at the national and local levels. Several members drew attention to the existence of collective bargaining agreements incorporating provisions to this effect, and to the existence of provisions for educational leave. One member also drew attention to the development of private health insurance schemes in her own country. Various members of the Commission stressed the close connexion between the question of the right to material security in case of old age and the next item on the agenda which dealt with the age of retirement and right to pension; their views are reflected below, in the section

of the report dealing with that subject. Several members also expressed the view that the special situation concerning working women with family responsibilities should be taken into account in determining provisions concerning the age of retirement and the right to a pension.

92. During the course of the debate, the Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions and of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Age of retirement and right to pension

93. The Commission discussed this sub-item of its agenda at its 273rd through 277th meetings. During the course of the debate, members expressed their appreciation for the Secretary-General's report on this subject (E/CN.6/321), and for the co-operation shown by the non-governmental organizations in forwarding the material used in the preparation of this report.

94. The debate centred on the question of the desirability of lower retirement and pensionable ages for women as compared to those of men.

95. Several members of the Commission expressed a strong preference for absolute equality as between men and women with regard both to the age of retirement and to optional pensionable age. These members stressed the danger of discrimination against women in employment if a lower pensionable or retirement age were enforced, since they noted that many employers were unwilling to engage women who were approaching pensionable age. It was also noted that retirement at an earlier pensionable age resulted in lower pensions for women. The view was expressed that lower pensionable and retirement ages seriously affected the possibilities of career advancement for women, since higher policy-making posts were normally reserved for senior personnel.

96. These members stated that, since older women were not likely to have retained a heavy burden of family cares, there was no adequate basis for maintaining that women should be entitled to an earlier retirement or pensionable age than men on the grounds of women's special responsibilities to their families. It was also felt that the lower life expectancy of men was a strong argument for reducing the retirement and pensionable ages for men. One member expressed the view that exceptions to equality of retirement and pensionable ages should be based entirely on the nature of the work and on the possible dangers to the community of the continued employment of ageing workers. Another member of the Commission emphasized that the establishment of international standards under United Nations auspices based on equality as between men and women would be of great help in guiding the economically under-developed countries, now undergoing the process of industrialization, to adopt just legislation in this respect.

97. Some members, on the other hand, felt that the principle of equality as between men and women should be considered in the light of women's major contribution to society, and that the community should recognize this principle by permitting a lower pensionable age for women than for men. These members emphasized that such provisions were predicated however on the existence of legislation guaranteeing the right to employment, and they stressed the importance of safeguarding women's right to continue to work while receiving a pension. One member felt that it would not be advisable to advocate absolute equality in those countries where women

were now entitled to a lower pensionable age, and she expressed the hope that technical advances would facilitate the lowering of the optional retirement age and of the pensionable age for all workers in the not too distant future.

98. Other members drew attention to the diversity of opinion concerning age of retirement and pensionable age; they felt that the question of personal choice was a major factor to be considered in this connexion. One member noted that women were given a wider latitude of choice under the legislation in force in her country, and that in actual fact the age at which women chose to retire did not differ significantly from that chosen by men. Another member expressed the view that it might be advisable to let women continue to work as long as they wished, provided they remained fit and efficient. In this connexion, another member drew attention to the differences of opinion existing among women workers in her own country as far as a lower pensionable age was concerned: she noted that less qualified women workers were in favour of a lower pensionable age for women than for men, while highly trained and professional women workers who performed interesting work and had advancement possibilities were in favour of an equal pensionable age. This member felt that for women in senior or policy-making jobs it might be advisable to provide for equality as to pensionable age with men.

99. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the International Alliance of Women, the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women and the International Council of Social Democratic Women.

100. At its 275th, 276th and 277th meetings, the Commission considered the draft resolution submitted by Canada, the Dominican Republic, France and Sweden (E/CN.6/L.243), in which the Commission requested the Economic and Social Council to adopt a draft resolution, the operative part of which read as follows:

"1. *Urges* the non-governmental organizations to continue their efforts towards equal rights of women in respect of the age of retirement and rights to pension of workers;

"2. *Recommends* that all States members of the United Nations and the specialized agencies facilitate, by all appropriate means, the equal treatment of men and women workers with respect to pension plans, and the implementation of the principle that the normal retirement age should be the same for men and women."

At the suggestion of the ILO representative, the sponsors of the draft resolution agreed at the 275th meeting to insert the words "and pensionable age" in operative paragraph 2 after the words "retirement age".

101. At the 276th meeting, the representative of Poland submitted three amendments (E/CN.6/L.246) to the draft resolution. The first amendment would replace the second paragraph of the preamble by the following text:

103. The Commission considered item 7 of its agenda at its 275th meeting. It had before it a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/254/Add.4) on recent changes in legislation affecting the nationality of mar-

"Recognizing that in principle all discrimination between men and women with regard to the right to work and the right to pension should be eliminated;

"Considering that the differences in age existing between men and women when they attain pensionable age should not have any effect on the amount of the pension and should not necessarily entail retirement, which should be decided by the will of the worker, and by his capacity to work."

The second amendment would replace operative paragraph 1 by the following:

"1. *Urges* the non-governmental organizations to continue their efforts towards equal rights for men and women in respect of the right to work and the right to pension of workers;"

and the third amendment would replace paragraph 2 by the following text:

"2. *Recommends* that all States members of the United Nations and all the specialized agencies facilitate, by all appropriate means, the equal treatment of men and women workers with respect to the right to work and the right to pension."

At its 277th meeting, the Commission rejected the Polish amendments by the following votes: the first amendment was rejected by 4 votes to 11, with 2 abstentions; the second amendment was rejected by 5 votes to 11, with 1 abstention, and the third amendment by 6 votes to 11, with no abstentions.

102. At its 277th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.243) as amended, by 9 votes to none, with 8 abstentions; the representative of Mexico who was not present during the vote subsequently requested to be recorded as having voted in favour of the draft resolution, and the record was accordingly altered to read 10 votes to none, with 8 abstentions. The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 5 (XII)

AGE OF RETIREMENT AND RIGHT TO PENSION

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Having considered the report by the Secretary-General on the age of retirement and the right to pension (E/CN.6/321) and the report by the International Labour Office on the right to material security in case of old age (E/CN.6/323, part B),

Recalling that, at its eleventh session, the Commission decided to consult with non-governmental organizations before making a recommendation on the desirability either of the same or of a lower age of retirement for women workers compared with that of men,

Noting that a majority of non-governmental organizations consulted on the question of the age of retirement expressed themselves in favour of the same age of retirement for men and women,

Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution: . . .

[*For the text of the draft resolution, see chapter XVI, draft resolution C II.*]

VI. NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN

ried women; the report contained also a table of the effect of marriage on the nationality of women, consolidating information included in documents E/CN.6/254/Add.1 to 4.

104. During the general debate, it was noted that the recent changes in legislation reported on by the Secretary-General indicated general progress in the direction of equal rights for men and women with respect to nationality, and showed that among the States referred to in this document there were now only six where there was still discriminatory legislation. Several representatives stated that annual reports by the Secretary-General on this subject were essential for the work of the Commission, and requested that they be continued.

105. Several members of the Commission emphasized that in their countries legislation affecting the national-

ity of married women was already in agreement with the principles of the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, and informed the Commission that their Governments intended to ratify the Convention in the very near future. It was announced that five States had already ratified the Convention, and it was hoped that a sixth State would soon ratify it, so that the Convention could come into effect.

106. One member pointed out that the inclusion of a territorial application clause had facilitated the adherence of some States to the Convention.

VII. EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

107. The Commission considered item 8 of its agenda at its 278th to 283rd meetings. The Commission had before it two reports: a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/325), transmitting a draft pamphlet on equal pay for equal work which had been prepared in consultation with the International Labour Office; and a report prepared by the International Labour Office (E/CN.6/322) on equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value.

General developments

108. The Commission heard the representative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), who reported on the action taken by various States members of the ILO with regard to ILO Convention No. 100 and Recommendation No. 90. She drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that ILO Convention No. 100 had so far been ratified by twenty-six States, of which seven States had ratified the Convention during 1957 and the first three months of 1958, and she noted that the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, which had been signed at Rome on 25 March 1957, included an article binding the States to ensure and promote the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work as between male and female workers.

109. Several members of the Commission expressed their appreciation for the report prepared by the ILO and they noted that the report gave evidence of considerable progress towards the achievement of the principle of equal pay for equal work. Several members also drew attention to omissions in the ILO report, and they supplemented the information contained in it with details concerning recent developments in their own countries. One member expressed the view that future annual reports in the series should include more information on the activities of non-governmental organizations with regard to equal pay. At the request of another member of the Commission, the representative of the ILO undertook, on behalf of her Organisation, to provide, for future sessions of the Commission, information on equal pay similar in form to the annual memorandum by the Secretary-General on constitutions, electoral laws and other legal instruments relating to the political rights of women; the information would include tables showing countries which had ratified ILO Convention No. 100 and the relevant legislation adopted by States.

110. Several members regretted that ILO Convention No. 100 had so far only been ratified by twenty-six States, and felt that non-governmental organizations, including trade unions, should intensify their efforts to influence their Governments to ratify the Convention. One member felt that States which had ratified the Convention were in a less favourable economic position than

countries which had not as yet put the principle of equal pay into effect, and other members drew attention to certain constitutional difficulties and to the reluctance of their Governments to intervene in collective bargaining procedures in the field of private employment.

111. One member expressed the view that the full implementation of the principle of equal pay did not have unfavourable economic repercussions, but, on the contrary, increased purchasing power in the economy. The view was also expressed that the question of equal pay was very closely connected to the whole problem of economic opportunities for women, and that the achievement of equal pay for equal work did not of itself solve the related problem of improving women's opportunities for promotion to more responsible positions. The particular problems of working women who were the sole providers for their families, and of women employed in occupations traditionally regarded as "women's jobs" were also stressed in this connexion. Another member felt that women's lack of specialized and advanced training and their casual attachment to the labour market hindered the implementation of the principle of equal pay in a number of areas of employment.

112. In discussing practical measures which could be undertaken to further the implementation of the principle of equal pay, members emphasized the importance of improving national legislation in that respect, and it was also felt that the international trade union organizations could play a most important role in encouraging the inclusion of equal pay provisions in collective bargaining agreements. In this connexion, members stressed the importance of increasing women's participation in trade unions and in collective bargaining negotiations. Several members outlined their countries' experience with educational campaigns designed to further public understanding of the principle of equal pay, and they stressed the value of study groups and meetings on that subject. Particular attention was paid to the need for an accurate job analysis and to the evaluation of the relative content of "women's jobs" as compared to equivalent occupations in other fields. One member felt that the conclusions drawn by job appraisal experts and committees required careful scrutiny so as to avoid perpetuation of inequality in pay schedules. Members of the Commission repeatedly stressed the importance of providing adequate educational and training opportunities for women so that they could be qualified for advancement to higher posts.

113. During the course of the debate on the various aspects of equal pay for equal work, the Commission heard statements by the observers for Italy and for Romania, as well as by the representatives of the following non-governmental organizations: International Con-

federation of Free Trade Unions, International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, World Federation of Trade Unions, Catholic International Union for Social Service, International Alliance of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women and International Federation of Women Lawyers.

Draft pamphlet on equal pay for equal work

114. In discussing the draft pamphlet on equal pay for equal work (E/CN.6/325), the members of the Commission expressed their appreciation for the work which had been undertaken by the Secretary-General and the International Labour Office in the preparation of this document, and they felt that the draft constituted a most useful working paper, which could serve as a basis for a future publication. It was felt that the draft contained a considerable amount of valuable information on international action concerning equal pay for equal work and on the activities undertaken by non-governmental organizations in this field. It was also felt that such a publication should reflect the Commission's views on equal pay in some detail, and that the sections of the draft dealing with legislation and collective bargaining agreements could be expanded to include some of the measures set forth in the annual progress reports of the ILO. One member felt that the pamphlet should include arguments in favour of the principle of equal pay. Another member felt that the pamphlet should deal with population trends and full employment as they affected equal pay for equal work; in the opinion of this member, the pamphlet in its final form should be aimed at the general public, and should deal in the main with actual developments. Other members felt that wage fixing procedures in piecework industries and in areas of employment largely reserved to women should receive particular attention in the draft. One member stated that particular emphasis should be placed on measures taken to further the principle of equal pay in those countries which were now undergoing the process of industrialization. Several members also felt that if non-governmental organizations in consultative status had additional information which could be usefully considered in connexion with the revision of the draft pamphlet, this information could be forwarded to the Secretariat.

115. The ILO representative emphasized the potential value of such a publication. She felt that, in its present form, the draft was more than a pamphlet but less than a study, and that it was not yet in a form for publication. She felt that the document needed considerable revision and reorganization, and that it would be advisable to allow the United Nations Secretariat and the ILO the necessary time to submit a revised text to the Commission at its next session.

116. The Commission decided that it would be desirable for every member to forward general comments on the draft pamphlet to the United Nations Secretariat and to the International Labour Office before 31 July 1958, so as to enable the secretariats concerned to continue their consultations and to take these comments into account as far as possible and to prepare a further draft for the Commission's consideration at its thirteenth session.

Draft International Labour Organisation Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation

117. One of the members drew the attention of the Commission to the draft Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation

which was now under consideration by the ILO,³ and in particular to article 6 of that draft which read as follows:

“Equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value is dealt with in the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951, and is therefore not dealt with in this Convention.”

118. Several members of the Commission participating in the debate expressed their deep concern that, in article 6 as it was now drafted, equal remuneration for work of equal value had been specifically excluded from the scope of the draft Convention on the grounds that the question had been dealt with in ILO Convention (No. 100) concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value. These members thought that it would hinder the implementation of the principle of equal pay to include such an article in the draft Convention on the grounds that its inclusion would enable States which had not ratified the ILO Convention No. 100 to adhere to the Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation. It was also stated that the Commission had been working to further the acceptance and implementation of the principle of equal pay for a number of years, and that it was the duty of the Commission to take a definite stand in favour of the exclusion of article 6 from the draft Convention. One member also felt that the best solution would be to press for the inclusion of a specific mention of the importance of the principle of equal pay in the draft Convention.

119. Another member questioned the desirability of proposing the exclusion of article 6, and she noted that, in the experience of her Government, it had been found that discrimination against minority groups occurred for the most part in matters relating to access to employment. This member felt that the reference to wage discrimination based on sex would tend to create confusion as to the basic purpose of the draft Convention; she also stated that in her country legal instruments had been found more effective when they were directed to a specific purpose and provided for uniform enforcement methods.

120. In reply to questions put to her by some members of the Commission concerning the draft Convention, the ILO representative explained that article 6 had been included at the request of several States members of the International Labour Organisation, and had not appeared in the original draft prepared by the International Labour Office. In her opinion, the article had been included with the purpose of facilitating States members of the ILO to sign and ratify the proposed Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation. She also felt that if members of the Commission were anxious to have this text excluded from the proposed Convention, it would be advisable for them to bring the matter to the attention of their Governments, so that the appropriate action could be taken by the member States of the ILO at the forthcoming ILO Conference, which would take place in June 1958.

121. During the course of the debate, members of the Commission discussed various measures which could be taken to bring the views of the Commission concerning the deletion of article 6 to the attention of the International Labour Conference. It was felt that members

³ International Labour Conference, 42nd session, 1958, Report IV (2), *Discrimination in the Field of Employment and Occupation* (Geneva, ILO, 1958), pp. 32 ff.

of the Commission, and especially those members whose Governments had already ratified ILO Convention No. 100, should bring the question to the attention of their Governments, and should request that their Governments' representatives to the forthcoming forty-second session of the International Labour Conference press for the deletion of article 6 from the proposed Convention. Several members felt that, whilst such action was most desirable, it was not sufficient in itself, and that it would be necessary for the Commission to take further steps to ensure that the views expressed in the debate were brought to the attention of the International Labour Conference. In this connexion, it was suggested that the Secretary-General of the United Nations be requested to appoint to the forthcoming International Labour Conference a representative who would be either a member of the Commission or a member of the United Nations Secretariat well informed on this subject, so that the position of the Commission could be explained in full.

122. At its 282nd meeting, the Commission examined a draft resolution submitted by the representatives of Belgium, the Dominican Republic, France and Venezuela (E/CN.6/L.255/Rev.1); the representatives of Cuba and Mexico also joined in sponsoring this text. The draft resolution requested the Economic and Social Council to adopt a resolution expressing the hope that the International Labour Conference, when considering the draft Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation, would find it possible to delete article 6. Amendments to this draft resolution were submitted jointly by the United Kingdom and by the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.256); these amendments proposed (1) the deletion of all reference to the Economic and Social Council and (2) the replacement of the operative paragraph of the draft resolution by the following text:

“Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to the International Labour Organisation the record of the exchange of views in the Commission on the desirability of deleting article 6 from the proposed Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation.”

During the discussion, the representatives of the Secretary-General and of the ILO made statements in response to a number of questions put by several members.

123. As a result of the debate on the draft resolution and the amendments thereto, the sponsors submitted a revised version (E/CN.6/L.255/Rev.2) in which the Secretary-General was requested by the Commission to appoint a representative to present the position of the Commission at the forthcoming International Labour Conference. The Commission examined this text at its 283rd meeting. The representative of the United States of America proposed an oral amendment which would add a phrase to the operative paragraph recommending that the Economic and Social Council, at its twenty-fifth session, request the Secretary-General to take the action set forth in the operative paragraph. The representative of the United Kingdom doubted whether it was advisable to propose the deletion of article 6 at this stage, and suggested that the second amendment contained in document E/CN.6/L.256 (see para. 122 above) be added in the operative part. The sponsors of the revised draft resolution accepted both proposals, and the representatives of the United Kingdom and of the United States therefore withdrew the amendments set forth in document E/CN.6/L.256.

124. The representative of Poland questioned the legality of the inclusion of article 6 in the draft Convention, and referred to a vote which had been taken at the International Labour Conference. The Commission heard a statement by the representative of the ILO concerning the legality of the insertion of this article and the vote taken on the subject.

125. The representative of Mexico stated that it would be contradictory to exclude from the scope of application of the proposed Convention the principle of non-discrimination in remuneration based on sex while article 1 of the proposed draft Convention defined discrimination as “adverse distinction made on the basis of race, colour, sex . . . which deprives a person of equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation”. She suggested that article 6 of the draft Convention would have the effect of disrupting the unity between the fundamental principles of the Convention. She therefore submitted an oral amendment to include in the revised draft resolution a new paragraph which would be operative paragraph 1. The sponsors of the draft accepted this amendment since they felt that the inclusion of this paragraph greatly strengthened the original draft.

126. The Commission then adopted the revised draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.255/Rev.2), as amended, by 14 votes to none, with 4 abstentions. The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 6 (XII)

DRAFT INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION CONVENTION CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Considering that the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers is proclaimed in article 23, paragraph 2, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the question of equal pay,

Concerned with the fact that the draft Convention on Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation excludes, in its article 6, equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value, from the scope of application of the said Convention,

1. *Considers* that the inclusion of article 6 in the international Convention on Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation would disrupt the organic unity which should exist between the principles of that instrument and would prejudice its future application;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to the International Labour Organisation the record of the exchange of views in the Commission on the desirability of deleting article 6 from the proposed Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation;

3. *Recommends* that the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-fifth session, requests the Secretary-General to appoint a representative to the forthcoming International Labour Conference in June 1958, during the discussion at the Conference of the draft Convention on Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation, who would be fully informed of the position taken by the majority of the members of the Commission on the Status of Women on this question, with the mandate to present this position to the International Labour Conference.

VIII. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVISORY SERVICES PROGRAMMES IN RELATION TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN

127. The Commission considered item 9 of its agenda at its 276th to 280th meetings. It had before it a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/326) on technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women, containing data on the number of women experts and consultants and on fellowships awarded to women in the United Nations programmes. The Commission also had before it a report by the Secretary-General on advisory services in the field of human rights (E/3075), a note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/331), transmitting this report as well as General Assembly resolution 1163 (XII), a note by the Secretary-General on an international seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life (E/CN.6/315), and a note by the Secretary-General transmitting a letter from the President of the Inter-American Commission of Women concerning advisory services in the field of human rights (E/CN.4/768-E/CN.6/332). In addition, the attention of the Commission was drawn to the report of the Seminar on the Civic Responsibilities and Increased Participation of Asian Women in Public Life,⁴ which was held at Bangkok from 5 to 16 August 1957.

128. The attention of the Commission was also drawn to the note by the Secretary-General on advisory services in the field of human rights and suggested activities during 1959 (E/CN.4/L.478).

129. The Commission heard a statement by the Deputy Director-General of the World Health Organization, who spoke on technical assistance rendered by the Organization under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the regular budget, and described the system of awarding fellowships under these programmes. He informed the Commission that 37 per cent of all professional staff in the field were women, and 25 per cent of the fellowships awarded were for women. The value of increasing the proportion of women experts and fellows was emphasized.

130. The Commission also heard a statement by the Chief of the European office of the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration in which he described the system of awarding fellowships and scholarships under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the regular programmes of technical assistance of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. The primary responsibility of Governments in nominating more women candidates for fellowships and scholarships was stressed in this statement, as was the important role which could be played by the national technical assistance committees in recommending qualified women candidates for fellowships and scholarships, and in bringing to the attention of the appropriate recruitment offices the names of women qualified to serve as experts and consultants in the technical assistance programmes. The value of increasing the proportion of women experts, fellows and scholars was also emphasized.

131. In discussing the participation of women in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the regular technical assistance programme of the United Nations, members of the Commission participating in the debate expressed their concern that the number of women experts, fellows and scholars remained relatively

low, and that such appointments tended to be heavily concentrated in fields traditionally regarded as women's occupations, such as nursing and social welfare. Since the proportion of women participating in the programmes depended in the first instance on the relative numbers of women nominated as candidates by Governments, it was felt that the attention of Governments and of national committees concerned with technical assistance programmes should be drawn to the desirability of nominating more women, and that qualified women should be encouraged to come forward as candidates for recruitment and for awards. The importance of the role which could be played by non-governmental organizations in this respect was stressed. It was felt that women should be trained also in fields other than those traditionally reserved to women, and one member noted that the encouragement of such a trend was of particular importance in countries now in the early stages of industrialization.

132. During the debate on advisory services in the field of human rights, the Commission expressed its appreciation for the documentation prepared by the Secretary-General, and noted with great satisfaction the report of the Seminar on the Civic Responsibilities and Increased Participation of Asian Women in Public Life, which was held at Bangkok at the invitation of the Government of Thailand in August 1957, and was the first seminar to be held under the advisory services programme. The progress which had been made in the development of the advisory services programme was noted with satisfaction, as was the possibility of increasing the budgetary allocations for this programme.

133. Members of the Commission whose countries had participated in the Bangkok Seminar emphasized that the Seminar had been extremely successful in stimulating interest in the civic responsibilities of women throughout the area, and that it had provided an excellent opportunity for the exchange of experience and opinions on problems of mutual interest. Several of these members described national meetings and other activities which had been undertaken as a direct result of the Seminar. All members of the Commission participating in the debate expressed satisfaction with the success of the 1957 Seminar, and felt that such seminars could make a most useful contribution to international understanding and friendship and to the improvement of the status of women. The opinion was expressed that attention should be given to following up the work accomplished in future seminars by holding national seminars and providing experts and fellowships in fields related to the seminar topics. It was also stressed that Governments should nominate well-qualified persons for selection as seminar participants, and one member emphasized that seminars on the status of women should be attended also by men, and not be regarded as matters exclusively reserved for consideration by women.

134. Members of the Commission were unanimous in thinking that the holding of seminars was a most useful way of improving the status of women. The regions of Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe were variously mentioned as areas which could benefit from seminars on such topics as civic responsibilities and the status of women in public and in private law, and the view was expressed that such seminars should be organized annually. While most members felt that future seminars

⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1957.IV.10.

should be organized on a regional basis to consider problems and experience common to the area, others stated that in their opinion some aspects of the status of women should be discussed at the international as well as at the regional level. In this connexion, one member felt that such questions as equal pay for equal work and economic opportunities for women could best be dealt with at the international level, but that other matters, such as access to education and civic responsibilities, should be the subject of regional seminars. This member also emphasized the importance of ensuring that every Member State in the region in which a seminar was organized would have full access to the country acting as host to the seminar. Another member recalled the Commission's debate at its eleventh session on the convening of an international seminar on civic responsibilities and the increased participation of women in public life⁵ and she felt that a seminar on this subject, which would include prominent women legislators as participants, would not only be of use to the participants but would also serve as a guide in the organization of subsequent regional seminars, and would focus world public opinion on the importance of this aspect of the status of women. She also felt that such a seminar would help non-governmental organizations in their work, and would assist women by tending to increase their participation in political parties at the national and local levels.

135. On behalf of her Government, the representative of Argentina extended an invitation to the Secretary-General to organize in 1959 a regional seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life in Argentina. The representative of the United States of America also renewed the invitation extended by her Government in 1956 to act as host for a regional seminar on the civic responsibilities of women. Members of the Commission expressed their deep appreciation for the invitations conveyed by the representatives of Argentina and of the United States of America, and several members stated that they hoped at a future date to be in a position to extend similar invitations on behalf of their Governments.

136. During the course of the debate, the Commission heard statements by the representatives of the All-Pakistan Women's Association, the International Alliance of Women, the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Federation of Women Lawyers and the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

137. At its 278th, 279th and 280th meetings, the Commission considered a draft resolution submitted by the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Pakistan and the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.249); at a later stage, Argentina, the United Kingdom and Venezuela joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. At the 278th meeting, amendments to the draft resolution were submitted by the representatives of Israel (E/CN.6/L.250) and of Poland (E/CN.6/L.251). The representative of the United States of America subsequently tabled amendments (E/CN.6/L.252) to the amendments of Israel and of Poland.

138. At its 280th meeting, the Commission considered the first amendment submitted by Israel, which proposed the addition of the following preambular paragraph to the draft resolution: "*Recognizing* the great importance

of both regional and international seminars for the promotion of the status of women." The representative of the United States withdrew the first of her amendments as set forth in document E/CN.6/L.252, in which she had proposed the replacement of the word "seminars" in the Israeli amendment by the word "meetings". The Commission then adopted the first Israeli amendment by 11 votes to 5, with 2 abstentions.

139. The representative of Israel then withdrew her second amendment in favour of the following wording: "with the understanding that every Member State in the region may participate and that any other Member State may attend a regional seminar as an observer", which the representative of the United States of America, in her second amendment (E/CN.6/L.252), had proposed should be added at the end of operative paragraph 4; the representative of Israel interpreted this text to mean that any Member State in the region would have access to the venue of a regional seminar for the purpose of participating in it, and that any other Member State would similarly have access to attend as an observer. The Commission adopted the second amendment of the United States of America by 13 votes to 3, with 2 abstentions.

140. The representative of Poland then withdrew her original amendment (E/CN.6/L.251) to include a new operative paragraph after paragraph 2, and proposed in its stead a number of oral amendments to the operative part of the draft resolution; she later withdrew these oral amendments in favour of the following wording, proposed in the third amendment of the United States of America (E/CN.6/L.252):

"*Hopes* also that a regional seminar will be organized in 1961, either in Africa or in Latin America, depending on where a seminar is held in 1959, and that a regional seminar will be organized in Europe at a later date;"

after the word "regional" in the last phrase had been deleted by the sponsor of the amendment. The Commission adopted the amendment by 17 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

141. The Commission unanimously adopted the draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.249), as amended. The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 7 (XII)

SEMINARS ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status of Women,
Recalling its resolution 10 (XI),⁶

Noting with satisfaction the success of the Seminar on the Civic Responsibilities and Increased Participation of Asian Women in Public Life held at Bangkok in August 1957,

Noting with particular satisfaction that, in its resolution 1163 (XII) of 26 November 1957, the General Assembly took note of this success and expressed the hope that seminars on the status of women would be held as frequently as possible in the future under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights,

Recognizing the great importance of both regional and international seminars for the promotion of the status of women,

Considering that the Seminar held in Bangkok has demonstrated the particular value of regional seminars where participants from countries with common inter-

⁵ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (E/2968)*, paras. 48-62.

⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 230.

ests and problems can benefit by sharing their experience and information,

Considering also that it is essential for the promotion of the status of women throughout the world that the next seminar in this field be held not later than in 1959,

Noting that, in his note on advisory services in the field of human rights and suggested activities during 1959, the Secretary-General suggests that a seminar may be held in 1959 on some aspect of the promotion of the status of women, that a seminar on the civic responsibilities of women and their increased participation in public life may be contemplated for 1959 in a region other than Asia, and that a seminar on the legal status of women in the family and on property rights of women held, for example, in Asia would prove most useful for the promotion of the status of women (E/CN.4/L.478, para. 3),

Noting that paragraph 2 (a) of General Assembly resolution 926 (X) of 14 December 1955 provides that the Secretary-General shall furnish the assistance referred to in the resolution at the request of Governments,

IX. PERIODICITY OF THE SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

142. The Commission considered item 10 of its agenda at its 277th and 278th meetings. It had before it a note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/316) on the periodicity of the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission also had before it statements by the International Alliance of Women (E/CN.6/NGO/49), by the Liaison Committee of Women's International Organizations (E/CN.6/NGO/54) and by the International Federation of Women Lawyers (E/CN.6/NGO/58).

143. During the general debate, members stressed the importance of the work which remained to be done by the Commission for the improvement of the status of women and the promotion of equal rights with men; several members insisted on the necessity of speeding up the work of the Commission in order to achieve the implementation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

144. Many representatives emphasized the need for the Commission to maintain its annual meetings, in accordance with resolution 532 (VI) of the General Assembly. Some representatives declared that it would be possible for the Commission to meet biennially only at such time in the future when the mandate of the Commission would have been nearer fulfillment. It was the general opinion of the representatives that, unfortunately for the cause of women, this time was not very near.

145. Two members expressed the view that, although their Governments believed that, in principle, the meetings of the Commission should be held biennially, they were not pressing for the implementation of that principle at this stage.

146. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Alliance of Women, the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, the International Federation of Women Lawyers, the Pan Pacific South-East Asia Women's Association and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom who strongly supported the continuation of annual sessions

1. *Expresses* the hope and the wish that it will be possible to organize in 1959 a regional seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life in either Africa or Latin America;

2. *Hopes* that a regional seminar on the legal status of women in the family and property rights of women will be organized in Asia in 1960;

3. *Hopes* also that a regional seminar will be organized in 1961, either in Africa or in Latin America, depending on where a seminar is held in 1959, and that a seminar will be organized in Europe at a later date;

4. *Expresses* the hope that Governments of Member States will extend invitations to hold such seminars in their respective countries;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consult with Governments of interested Member States in order to expedite the organization of these seminars, with the understanding that every Member State in the region may participate and that any other Member State may attend a regional seminar as an observer.

of the Commission. At the request of a member of the Commission, their view is now included in the report.

147. The representatives of Cuba, France, Japan, Pakistan, Sweden and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted a draft resolution (E/CN.6/L.248), recommending that the Commission continue to meet annually. The representatives of Argentina, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, Israel, Mexico and Venezuela expressed their wish to co-sponsor this draft.

148. The draft resolution was adopted unanimously at the 278th meeting of the Commission. The text of the resolution is as follows:

Resolution 8 (XII)

PERIODICITY OF THE SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Noting resolution 652-J (XXIV) of 24 July 1957 by which the Economic and Social Council invited the Commission to express its views on the recommendation of the Co-ordinating Committee that the Council establish the principle that the Commission on the Status of Women should, in the future, meet biennially,

Appreciating the fact that the Economic and Social Council has given the Commission the opportunity to consider this important subject,

Considering that women have not yet achieved equality with men as is demonstrated by the work of the Commission in its various fields of endeavour,

Believing that no effort should be spared to carry out the mandate of the Commission to promote the status of women and to work towards equality of rights between men and women,

Believing also that the work of the Commission cannot at present be handled effectively in sessions less frequent than once a year,

Recommends that the Commission continue to meet annually.

X. REPORT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN

149. The Commission considered item 11 of its agenda at its 281st meeting, and had before it the report submitted by the Inter-American Commission of Women (E/CN.6/333).

150. The representative of the Dominican Republic commented favourably on the report, but expressed her regret that the Inter-American Commission of Women had not been able to send a representative to the twelfth session, possibly because of its Chairman's trip to several countries of Latin America.

151. The Commission took note with appreciation of the report of the Inter-American Commission of Women.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING THE STATUS OF WOMEN

152. In accordance with resolution 76 (V) of the Economic and Social Council, as amended by resolution 304 I (XI), communications concerning the status of women had been summarized by the Secretary-General in a non-confidential list (E/CN.6/CR/11) and in a confidential list (SW/Communications List No. 7).

153. The non-confidential list was reviewed by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Communications, whose report (E/CN.6/L.253) was unanimously approved by the Commission at its 281st meeting.

154. At a closed meeting, the Commission received and took note of the confidential list.

XII. REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND TO THE TENTH SESSION OF THE SUB-COMMISSION ON THE PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

155. The Commission considered item 13 of its agenda at its 276th meeting.

156. The Commission heard the oral report of Mrs. Marie-Hélène Lefauchaux, the representative of France, who had represented the Commission at the thirteenth session of the Commission on Human Rights and at the tenth session of the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

157. Mrs. Lefauchaux reported on her participation in the discussion by the Commission on Human Rights of the item dealing with discrimination in education. She expressed her regret that the Commission on the Status of Women had not been represented at the fourteenth session of the Commission on Human Rights during the discussion of the report of the Sub-Commission

on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

158. In connexion with her participation in the work of the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, she referred to the question of discrimination in political rights, more particularly concerning the access of women to public services and functions; she also informed the Commission of her participation in the discussion in the Sub-Commission on the International Labour Organisation draft Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation (see paras. 117-126 above).

159. In taking note of this report, the Commission expressed its deep appreciation of the services rendered by its representative.

160. The Commission heard a statement by the representative of the International Association of Penal Law.

XIII. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

161. The Commission discussed item 14 of its agenda at its 281st meeting.

162. Members of the Commission expressed the view that this question was a matter of particular interest to the Commission, which was concerned with the implementation of Article 8 of the United Nations Charter; they felt that this item should figure on the Commission's agenda each year.

163. The representative of the Dominican Republic stated that the participation of women in the work of the United Nations should not be limited to employment in the secretariats of the United Nations and of the

specialized agencies, but that more Governments should appoint women to responsible positions in their delegations to the General Assembly, to other organs of the United Nations and to their permanent delegations to the United Nations. She expressed the hope that women in the secretariats would have the same opportunities for promotion as men, and that this policy would serve as an incentive and an encouragement to women junior officers. She also expressed her confidence that the Secretary-General would continue to make every effort to appoint women to senior positions in the Secretariat. Several members supported this view.

164. Another member recalled that the reports by the Secretary-General on the participation of women in the secretariat had been somewhat discouraging, and that they had been discontinued by the Secretary-General, who had advised the Commission that the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly was the only organ of the United Nations competent to request information on the subject.

165. Referring to her forthcoming retirement, all

members of the Commission paid a warm tribute to the competence, great qualities, diplomacy and indefatigable and intelligent devotion of Mrs. Mary Tenison-Woods, who set an example of what a woman could achieve, and whose work in the United Nations has been so valuable and so important for the cause of women.

166. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of the International Federation of Women Lawyers and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

XIV. REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES

167. At its 281st and 283rd meetings the Commission considered item 15 of its agenda. The Commission had before it a note by the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences (E/CN.6/L.236), a note by the Secretary-General on the review of the programme of work and the establishment of priorities (E/CN.6/330) and a working paper by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/L.254), suggesting a list of priorities on the basis of decisions reached at the eleventh and twelfth sessions of the Commission.

168. The attention of the Commission was drawn to the suggestions concerning limitation of documentation made by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/330) in the light of Economic and Social Council resolution 665 D (XXIV) and paragraph 3 (a) to (d) of the annex to resolution 664 (XXIV).

169. The Commission proceeded to consider the working paper by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/L.254). At the suggestion of the representative of the United States of America, it was agreed that the choice of the specific subjects to be dealt with in the reports on the economic rights of women (item (d) of the list of *ad hoc* projects of high priority for the fourteenth session of the Commission) be left to the decision of the Secretary-General in consultation with the International Labour Office.

170. The representative of the United Kingdom suggested that the next progress report by the International Labour Office on equal pay for equal work (listed under the continuing projects of high priority) be prepared for the fourteenth session of the Commission and not for the thirteenth; she felt that at the thirteenth session the Commission should devote as much time as possible to the discussion of the revised draft pamphlet on equal pay for equal work. The representative of the International Labour Organisation agreed with her suggestion, which was accepted by the Commission on the understanding that the revised draft pamphlet on equal pay for equal work (item (d) under *ad hoc* projects of high priority for the thirteenth session of the Commission) will include tables showing the present state of signatures and ratifications of the International Labour Organisation Convention No. 100, as well as of the application of the principle of equal pay in the various countries.

171. The representative of the Dominican Republic expressed her appreciation of the *Newsletter on the Status of Women*, and hoped that consideration might be given to the possibility of issuing it every three months.

172. The following programme of work was adopted unanimously by the Commission at its 282nd meeting:

I. Continuing projects of high priority

- (a) Political rights of women: (i) Memorandum for the General Assembly on the franchise and eligibility of women (Economic and Social Council resolution 120 A (VI)); (ii) Report by the Secretary-General on the status of women in Trust Territories (E/1316, para. 18 (2) and E/CN.6/330, Paras. 8 and 9); (iii) Report by the Secretary-General on the status of women in Non-Self-Governing Territories (E/1316, para. 18, and E/CN.6/330, paras. 8 and 9);
- (b) Access of women to education: Progress report by UNESCO on its activities in the field of women's education (Economic and Social Council resolution 154 F (VII));
- (c) Status of women in private law: Annual reports by the Secretary-General on legislation and practice in family law and property rights of women (Economic and Social Council resolution 546 F (XVIII));
- (d) Nationality of married women: Report by the Secretary-General containing information on recent changes in legislation concerning the nationality of married women (E/2850, para. 182, and E/3096, para. 104);
- (e) Advisory services in the field of human rights: Progress report by the Secretary-General (General Assembly resolution 926 (X));
- (f) Biannual *Newsletter on the Status of Women* (E/1712, para. 93);
- (g) Equal pay for equal work: Progress report by the International Labour Office on implementation by Governments of the principle of equal pay for equal work, including signatures and ratification of the ILO Convention (No. 100) on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (Economic and Social Council resolution 504 G (XVI)). For the fourteenth session of the Commission.

II. Ad Hoc projects of high priority for the thirteenth session of the Commission

- (a) Tax legislation applicable to women: Report by the Secretary-General based on replies of Governments and non-governmental organizations (Economic and Social Council resolution 652 H (XXIV));
- (b) Access of women to education: Report by UNESCO on the access of women to the teaching profession (E/3096, paras. 30 and 42);
- (c) Economic opportunities for women: Report by the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the specialized agencies concerned, on the occupational outlook for women (Economic and Social Council resolution 652 E (XXIV));
- (d) Equal pay for equal work: Revised draft pamphlet by the Secretary-General in consultation with the International Labour Office on equal pay for equal work (E/3096, para. 116).

III. Ad Hoc projects of high priority for the fourteenth session of the Commission

- (a) Political rights of women: Request to Governments of Member States and non-governmental organizations on the access of women to public services and functions and report by the Secretary-General based on replies received (E/3096, para. 26);
- (b) Access of women to education: Report by UNESCO on the access of women to out-of-school education (E/3096, paras. 30 and 42);
- (c) Status of women in private law: (i) Request to Governments of Member States and to non-governmental organi-

- zations for information on age of marriage, free consent of the parties to the marriage, and registration of marriages, and report by the Secretary-General based on replies received (E/3096, para. 56); (ii) Report by the Secretary-General containing a draft convention on the age of marriage, free consent of both parties to the marriage and compulsory registration of marriages (E/3096, para. 56);
- (d) Economic rights of women: Reports by the Secretary-General and by the International Labour Office concerning steps being taken by States Members of the United Nations and by the International Labour Organisation on the removal of economic discrimination against women (Economic and Social Council resolution 625 B (III) (XXII) and E/CN.6/330, para. 11).

XV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

173. At its 284th meeting the Commission unanimously adopted the report of its twelfth session to the Economic and Social Council.

XVI. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

A

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

The Economic and Social Council

Takes note of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (twelfth session) (E/3096).

B

STATUS OF WOMEN IN PRIVATE LAW

I

Age of marriage, free consent, and registration of marriages⁷

The Economic and Social Council

1. Requests the Secretary-General to circulate, to Member Governments and to non-governmental organizations in consultative status, a questionnaire designed to obtain information on consent to marriage and requirements as to age and registration of marriage;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to prepare for the fourteenth session of the Commission on the Status of Women a report based on the information received from Governments and from non-governmental organizations;

3. Invites Member Governments and non-governmental organizations to co-operate with the Secretary-General by providing the information requested at an early date;

4. Considers that it may be appropriate to prescribe desirable standards in this field by means of an international instrument under the auspices of the United Nations which would establish a minimum age of marriage, preferably of not less than sixteen years; the requirement of the free consent of both parties to the marriage; and the compulsory registration of marriages;

5. Invites the Secretary-General to prepare for the fourteenth session of the Commission on the Status of Women a draft convention dealing with the three questions outlined in paragraph 4 above.

II

Ritual operations⁸

The Economic and Social Council

1. Requests the World Health Organization to undertake an inquiry into the persistence of customs which subject girls to ritual operations, and into the measures adopted or planned for putting a stop to such practices;

2. Requests the World Health Organization to communicate the results of the inquiry to the Commission on the Status of Women before the end of 1959, for examination at its fourteenth session.

C

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

I

Working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities⁹

The Economic and Social Council,

Considering that constant improvement of the conditions of working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities, is of great importance in meeting practical needs and is one of the main concerns of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Considering that the Social Commission and the specialized agencies of the United Nations can contribute, within their respective fields of activity, both towards defining the problems and towards suggesting solutions for them,

Considering further that the International Children's Centre in Paris intends to undertake an inquiry into crèches and day nurseries, which play an important part in the improvement of the living conditions of working women with family responsibilities and are therefore relevant to the terms of reference of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Recognizing however that the subject of this inquiry

⁷ See paras. 44 to 56 of the present report.

⁸ See paras. 58 to 61 of the present report.

⁹ See paras. 63 to 81 of the present report.

may be more pertinent to the concerns of other bodies of the United Nations such as the Social Commission,

1. *Takes note* of the important information contained in the reports concerning working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities, submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women by the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/324) and by the International Labour Office (E/CN.6/329);

2. *Expresses* its gratitude to the non-governmental organizations in consultative status for their co-operation, and requests them to continue their efforts to enlighten public opinion on this important matter;

3. *Draws the attention* of Governments of Member States to the existing possibilities of utilizing the assistance available through the specialized agencies for the purpose of improving the situation of working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities;

4. *Requests* the specialized agencies concerned to give sympathetic consideration to any request submitted to them in connexion with assistance to working women, including working mothers, with family responsibilities, and to report to the Commission on the Status of Women on the services so rendered;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the inquiry to be undertaken by the International Children's Centre on crèches and day nurseries, and expresses the wish that the results of that inquiry be communicated to the Commission on the Status of Women at one of its next sessions.

II

*Age of retirement and right to pension*¹⁰

The Economic and Social Council,

Accepting the principle that women workers should be accorded conditions of work equal to those of men workers,

Believing therefore that there should be no differentiation between men and women workers with respect to age of retirement and rights to pension and that retirement age and pension rights should be determined according to rules applicable to men and women workers alike,

1. *Urges* the non-governmental organizations to continue their efforts towards equal rights of women in respect of the age of retirement and rights to pension of workers;

2. *Recommends* that all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies facilitate, by all appropriate means, the equal treatment of men and women workers with respect to pension plans, and the implementation of the principle that the normal retirement age and pensionable age should be the same for men and women.

¹⁰ See paras. 93 to 102 of the present report.

ANNEX

List of documents prepared for the Commission at its twelfth session

A/3627 and Corr.1	Constitutions, electoral laws and other legal instruments relating to political rights of women: memorandum by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/324	of capacity to work: report by the International Labour Office
E/CN.6/254/Add.4	Nationality of married women: memorandum by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/325	Working women, including working mothers with family responsibilities: report by the Secretary-General
E/CN.6/314	Provisional agenda for the twelfth session of the Commission	E/CN.6/326	Equal pay for equal work: report by the Secretary-General submitting a draft pamphlet
E/CN.6/315	International seminar on civic responsibilities and increased participation of women in public life: note by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/327	Technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women: report by the Secretary-General
E/CN.6/316	Periodicity of the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women: note by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/328	Access of women to higher education: report prepared by UNESCO in collaboration with the International Federation of University Women
E/CN.6/317 and E/CN.6/318	Consent to marriage and age of marriage: report by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/329	Access of women to secondary education: note by UNESCO
Corr.1 and Add.1	Information concerning the status of women in Non-Self-Governing Territories: report by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/330	Situation of working women with family responsibilities: report by the International Labour Office
E/CN.6/319	Information concerning the status of women in Trust Territories: report by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/331	Review of programme of work and establishment of priorities: note by the Secretary-General
E/CN.6/320	Access of women to education: UNESCO activities in 1957 of special interest to women: report by UNESCO	(E/CN.6/332) (E/CN.4/768)	Advisory services in the field of human rights: note by the Secretary-General
E/CN.6/321	Age of retirement and right to pension: report by the Secretary-General	E/CN.6/333	Advisory services in the field of human rights: note by the Secretary-General
E/CN.6/322	Equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value: report by the International Labour Office	E/CN.6/CR/11 E/CN.6/L.236	Report by the Inter-American Commission of Women
E/CN.6/323 and Corr.1	Right to rest and the right to material security in case of old age, illness or loss	SW/Communications List No. 7	Non-confidential list of communications Calendar of conferences: note by the Secretary-General Confidential list of communications