



Twentieth session
Agenda item 54

WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION

- (a) REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL;
- (b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. R. St. John MACDONALD (Canada)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 1336th plenary meeting, on 24 September 1965, the General Assembly allocated to the Third Committee agenda item 54, entitled "World social situation".
2. The Third Committee considered this item at its 1326th to 1331st meetings, from 1 to 5 November 1965, at its 1334th and 1335th meetings, on 8 and 9 November, and at its 1338th meeting, on 11 November 1965.
3. The Committee had before it the following documents:
 - (a) Reports of the Economic and Social Council (A/5803, chapter VIII, section II - "Social Development"; and A/6003, chapter XII, section I - "Social Development");
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General (A/6016) informing the General Assembly of the actions he had taken in implementing General Assembly resolution 1916 (XVIII).

II. GENERAL DISCUSSION

4. At its 1326th to 1331st meetings, the Committee held a general debate on the world social situation. The Director of the Bureau of Social Affairs opened the debate by outlining the main activities of the United Nations in the social field

as they related to the items covered in the reports of the Economic and Social Council, namely, social development, including social policy and planning; urban and regional development; social welfare; youth and national development; social defence; community development; and, finally, the question of reappraising the entire United Nations social programme. She urged all Governments to repond to the questionnaire which the Secretary-General had sent to them on 19 August 1965 on the subject of reappraisal.

5. The debate in the Committee centered mainly on means of attaining higher standards of living and economic and social progress, as well as on the tasks and activities of the United Nations connected therewith.

6. Many representatives of developing countries reported significant progress in the raising of standards of living and particularly in the elimination of illiteracy, better nutrition, development of health, elimination of epidemic diseases, better education, housing, social welfare and social security, employment and working conditions, and maternal and child welfare.

7. Representatives of developing countries gave accounts of the ways in which their Governments and peoples had sought to cope with their main social problems. They reported on general development, on assistance from the United Nations, its specialized agencies and bilateral sources. Some representatives underlined the importance of their programmes on land reform, fair distribution of national income, freedom and dignity of the human person, and equal rights for all citizens. Many speakers stressed that their countries had taken as their point of departure the principle that social development goes hand in hand with economic development; and in this connexion it was noted that planning had already proved to be an effective instrument for promoting co-ordinated economic and social development. Many representatives pointed out the interrelationship between regional and community development.

8. Many representatives nevertheless emphasized that despite these achievements their countries still faced grave economic and social problems, some of which remained unsolved. It was pointed out that social development required considerable resources, which many countries lacked, and that the problem was aggravated by the fact that in many States the rate of population growth was equal to or exceeded the rate of economic expansion.

9. In this connexion, representatives of developing countries pointed out that they lacked funds and personnel and that they required financial and technical assistance. They needed the whole-hearted and effective co-operation of the developed countries. A number of speakers pointed out that many of the social ills in the developing countries could be solved if the funds spent on the arms race were re-channelled to this useful purpose.
10. In the course of discussing United Nations activities in the social field, many delegates expressed their deep appreciation for the assistance which their countries had received from the United Nations, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and from the specialized agencies.
11. At the same time, a number of representatives expressed dissatisfaction with the present programme of the United Nations in the social field, in particular that of the Social Commission and of the Economic and Social Council, on the grounds that not enough attention was paid to fundamental social problems and reforms, which could help to find practical ways of solving social problems in the developing countries.
12. Other representatives expressed concern over the amount and character of assistance which the United Nations could provide to developing countries struggling to meet a wide range of social problems. In the opinion of one representative, the diversity of items on the Social Commission's agenda showed the lack of a central theme in the Commission's work.
13. In the light of this discussion, the representatives unanimously endorsed the idea expressed in Economic and Social Council resolution 1086 E (XXXIX), namely that the work programme and priorities in the social field and the role of the Social Commission should be re-examined.
14. Some representatives pointed out that the United Nations should concentrate its efforts on basic institutional reforms, such as land reform and the distribution of national income, medical assistance, unemployment, the elimination of illiteracy, the role of the state and the public sector in promoting economic and social development; on problems of balanced and co-ordinated economic and social development; and, particularly, on problems of planning.
15. Other representatives attached great importance to Economic and Social Council resolution 1086 C (XXXIX) on regional development, which made provision for a

programme of special significance to developing countries faced with problems of rapid urban growth and rural-urban migration. It was pointed out that national redistribution of population was essential if the worst features of urbanization were to be checked, and that regional planning and development could play an important role in this respect.

16. It was suggested that the Social Commission should study the social aspects of economic development, on the basis of United Nations economic reports. This would better enable the Commission to determine what social problems resulted from a given economic situation. The technical assistance programme in the social field was asked to place heavy stress on regional social development.

17. Several speakers stressed the importance of the population problem in relation to development efforts and stated that this field required increased attention by the United Nations. It was felt, in particular, that more attention should be given to the solution of social problems which were aggravated by rapid population increases.

18. Considerable emphasis was placed on the need for the United Nations family to devote more attention to problems of urbanization. Many representatives thought that the problem of youth and protection of moral values should have a place in the United Nations programme of social development. Several speakers suggested that greater attention be given to the problem of juvenile delinquency.

19. It was pointed out that the United Nations and the specialized agencies must accelerate their efforts to transfer to the developing countries the positive experience of other countries and the results of modern science and technology.

20. Taking into account the fact that the Social Commission should study the social aspects of economic development, some speakers proposed that the Social Commission should become in effect a committee for social development.

21. Some delegations touched upon the problem of the relationship between the United Nations and the various specialized agencies. The opinion was expressed that specialized agencies, such as UNESCO, ILO, WHO and FAO, as well as UNICEF, whose activities were also directed towards meeting social needs, should work closely with the United Nations social bodies. Some representatives considered that the Council had not satisfactorily discharged its co-ordinating function, and that it might be useful at the present stage to study ways and means of enabling

it to perform that function more effectively through greater concentration on questions of integrated programming.

22. Many representatives stressed the importance of carrying out General Assembly resolution 1916 (XVIII), in which the Secretary-General had been requested to prepare a draft programme of social development for the second half of the United Nations Development Decade.

23. Many representatives supported the idea of convening a conference of ministers responsible for social welfare, as envisaged in Economic and Social Council resolution 1086 F (XXXIX). Some speakers expressed reservations, however, noting that such a conference could serve a useful purpose if it considered definite goals and recommended positive and constructive measures to be taken by States, but that consideration of non-governmental activities would be less useful.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION

24. At the 1334th meeting of the Committee, on 8 November 1965, the representative of Kuwait introduced a draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1275) which was co-sponsored by Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Ceylon, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Guinea, India, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Nigeria and the United Arab Republic, later joined by Algeria and Yugoslavia. The Committee considered this draft at its 1334th and 1335th meetings on 8 and 9 November, and at its 1338th meeting, on 11 November 1965.

25. At the same meeting, the representative of Venezuela observed that during preliminary consultations on the draft resolution the phrase "with full respect for their permanent sovereignty over their natural resources" had been included, and he proposed orally that the co-sponsors should include in the draft the idea that the developing countries enjoy permanent sovereignty over their natural resources. At the 1338th meeting, on 11 November, on the suggestion of the representative of the Netherlands, he agreed to expand his oral amendment by adding the words "in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII)" relating to permanent sovereignty over natural resources.

26. At the 1334th meeting, the representative of Argentina, on behalf of fourteen Latin American delegations, introduced two further amendments. These were co-sponsored by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica,

Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay and Peru (A/C.3/L.1280). The first amendment was to replace in operative paragraph 1 (b) the words "should go together with a view to improving standards of living" by the words "promoted the raising of the level of living within a broader concept of freedom, and". The second amendment was to add a new operative paragraph reading as follows:

"4. Requests the Economic and Social Council to ask the Social Commission to study the possibility of preparing a Declaration on Social Development, based on the principles and purposes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which would lay down the broad lines of the objectives of social development and of the means for achieving it".

The second amendment was subsequently revised to read as follows (A/C.3/L.1280(Rev.1):

"4. Requests the Economic and Social Council to ask the Social Commission to study, in consultation with the specialized agencies, the possibility and advisability of preparing a declaration on social development, based on the principles and purposes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which would lay down the broad lines of the objectives of social development and of the means for achieving it, and to report to the General Assembly on the matter in due course."

This second amendment was further revised, at the 1338th meeting, in order to take into account the views of many members that the General Assembly should itself consider the question of a draft declaration on social development at its next session. The revised version "A/C.3/L.1280/Rev.2) read as follows:

"4. Decides to consider at its twenty-first session the possibility and advisability of preparing a declaration on social development, based on the principles and purposes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which would lay down the broad lines of the objectives of social development and of the means for achieving it; and for this purpose requests the Secretary-General to provide, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, the relevant documentation, data and any other appropriate information."

27. At the 1334th meeting, the representative of Morocco orally proposed that the latter part of operative paragraph 1 (a) should be set out as follows:

- "(i) Higher standards of living;
- (ii) Full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development;
- (iii) Solutions of international, economic, social, health and related problems;

(iv) International cultural and educational co-operation;

(v) And to make recommendations for the co-ordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies."

With regard to operative paragraph 1 (c), she suggested that the words "the basic requirement that economic and social development should go together" should be replaced by the words "the basic requirement for economic and social development which proceeded together".

28. The first amendment submitted by the Latin American countries (A/C.3/L.1280/Rev.2) and the oral amendments of representatives of Venezuela and Morocco were accepted by the sponsors and were reflected in their revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1275/Rev.1).

IV. VOTING

29. At its 1338th meeting, on 11 November, the Committee voted on the revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1275/Rev.1) and the amendment thereto (A/C.3/L.1280/Rev.2) as follows:

(a) At the request of the representative of Venezuela, a roll-call vote was taken on operative paragraph 1 (b), as orally revised to include at the end of the paragraph the words "in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII)". The paragraph was adopted by 88 votes to none, with 1 abstention. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Ceylon, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Democratic Republic), Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Against: None.

Abstention: Japan.

(b) The Latin American amendment (A/C.3/L.1280/Rev.2) to add a new operative paragraph 4 to the draft resolution was adopted by 84 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.

(c) The draft resolution as a whole, as amended, was adopted unanimously.

V. RECOMMENDATION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

30. The Third Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

World social situation

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General concerning the measures taken to implement General Assembly resolution 1916 (XVIII) of 5 December 1963,^{1/}

Taking note with satisfaction of Economic and Social Council resolution 1086 E (XXXIX) of 30 July 1965, by which the Council, inter alia, invited the Social Commission to re-examine, at its seventeenth session, the role which it should play within the framework of United Nations programmes in order to meet the needs of Member States and to submit its proposals regarding the actions to this effect to the Council at its forty-first session,

Recalling its resolution 1916 (XVIII) which, inter alia, requested the Economic and Social Council to review its resolution 496 (XVI) of 31 July 1953 entitled "Programme of concerted practical action in the social field of the United Nations and specialized agencies" in the light of the Report on the World Social Situation, 1963,^{2/} and of the objectives of the United Nations Development Decade,

Noting with deep concern the unsatisfactory social situation in many parts of the world,

Convinced that the activities of the United Nations in the social field should, above all, be concentrated on measures aimed at accelerated economic and social development, particularly of developing countries,

^{1/} A/6016.

^{2/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 63.IV.4.

1. Requests the Economic and Social Council and the Social Commission, when considering the role which the United Nations should play in the social field, to bear in mind, inter alia, the following general principles:

- (a) The responsibility of the Council as set forth in Articles 55 and 58 of the Charter of the United Nations:
 - (i) To promote higher standards of living;
 - (ii) To promote full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development;
 - (iii) To promote solutions of international, economic, social, health and related problems;
 - (iv) To promote international, cultural and educational co-operation;
 - (v) To make recommendations for the co-ordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies;
- (b) The necessity to direct the main efforts of the United Nations in the social field towards supporting and strengthening independent social and economic development in the developing countries, with full respect for their permanent sovereignty over their natural resources, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII) of 14 December 1962;
- (c) The interrelated character of economic and social factors and the basic requirement that economic and social development should go together with a view to promoting better standards of life in larger freedom, the importance of planning for achieving this end and the role of Governments in promoting balanced and sound economic and social development;
- (d) The necessity for mobilizing national resources and encouraging creative initiatives of all peoples for the achievement of social progress;
- (e) The significance of adequate structural social and economic changes for the achievement of social progress;

- (f) The necessity of the widest possible utilization of the experience of the developed and developing countries with varying economic and social systems;

2. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the specialized agencies and in the light of relevant discussions and decisions of the Social Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, to prepare, for submission by the Council to the Assembly at its twenty-first session, a draft long-range social programme of the United Nations and a report on the implementation of Assembly resolution 1916 (XVIII);

3. Requests the Economic and Social Council, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, to submit proposals in respect of vital social problems on which the General Assembly might appropriately take action and make recommendations in accordance with Article 13 of the Charter;

4. Decides to consider at its twenty-first session the possibility and advisability of preparing a declaration on social development, based on the principles and purposes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and on the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which would lay down broad lines for the objectives of social development and for the means of achieving it, and, for this purpose, requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, to provide the relevant documentation, data and appropriate information.
