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MEETING**

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**Chairman: Mrs. Aase LIONAES (Norway).**

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. López (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

**AGENDA ITEM 12**

**Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters VI and VII) (A/3613, A/C.3/L.609, A/C.3/L.610) (continued)**

**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mr. ALDUNATE (Chile) congratulated the Secretary-General on his excellent Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1) and paid a tribute to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) for their valuable assistance. It was regrettable that the improvement of social conditions gave rise to such great difficulties, but the Chilean delegation considered that to recognize the existence of the difficulties, as a study of the report made it possible to do, was to make a first step towards their solution.

2. Referring briefly to chapter VI, section II, of the Council's report (A/3613), he drew attention to the demographic problems with which the under-developed countries were faced. He recalled that the Population Commission gave priority to the execution of regional and national projects in close co-operation with the Governments concerned, and he was glad to be able to inform the Committee that the Latin American centre for demographic research and training at Santiago had already been in operation for two months. The centre had been established through the joint efforts of the Technical Assistance Administration, which had sent the first group of professors and some technical equipment, and the Chilean Government, which, through the State University, had furnished some essential items of equipment.

3. Chile attached special importance to the questions dealt with by the Commission on Human Rights and had always taken an active and enthusiastic part in its work. A meeting of United Nations experts to study the possibility of organizing the first Latin American seminar on the protection of human rights in criminal law and procedure had been held at Santiago in August 1957. The experts had decided that the seminar could be held in 1958 and the Chilean Government had officially proposed to the Secretary-General that it

should be held in Chile in June and July of that year. He hoped that that regional seminar would be as successful as the one recently held at Bangkok.

4. The Chilean delegation was pleased to be represented on the Council Committee on the Tenth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was gratified that Mr. Epinat, the French representative, had been elected Chairman of the Committee, on the proposal of Chile, and it would co-operate enthusiastically in the preparation and co-ordination of plans which would enable the whole world to observe the anniversary in an appropriate manner.

5. In conclusion, he expressed his country's satisfaction at having been elected a member of the Economic and Social Council by a nearly unanimous vote of the General Assembly (695th plenary meeting).

6. Mrs. LEFLEROVA (Czechoslovakia) said that the Czechoslovak delegation had submitted its draft resolution on further development of international co-operation in the field of science, technology, culture, education and tourism (A/C.3/L.610) in order to facilitate the work of the Committee, which would thus have a concrete proposal before it. She deplored the fact that, despite the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1043 (XI), the Economic and Social Council had not given proper attention to the problem of international cultural and scientific co-operation and had confined itself to deciding that no further action was required at that time. Nevertheless, the problem deserved study in all its aspects. She therefore hoped that the Czechoslovak text would be accepted unanimously and that the Council would thus be able, on the basis of the observations and concrete proposals of Governments and the specialized agencies, to submit appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirteenth session.

7. Mrs. QUAN (Guatemala) considered that the Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1) prepared by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the ILO, FAO, UNESCO and WHO, deserved all the praise that had been bestowed upon it and constituted an excellent example of international co-operation. When the Economic and Social Council had studied the report, it had noted with satisfaction that such studies brought social problems and needs to the attention of the international community, thereby fostering a sense of international responsibility and promoting international action. They served as a guide for international social policy and at the same time played an important part in the formulation and development of social policy at the national level. That in itself was enough to make the study an exceptionally useful document. Moreover, by bringing out the interrelation between economic and social factors and the need for balance in the factors of development, the report had shown the importance of taking into account all the elements affecting social advancement.

8. The United Nations rightly attached great importance to the method of community development, which mobilized the human and material resources of a given locality and called for the active participation of the population. However, that action remained local and generally consisted of isolated experiments; it might perhaps be preferable for each country, taking into account its own peculiar social, economic and cultural characteristics, to plan its development at the national or regional level, in order to put the available resources to the best use. She recalled that the trend towards regional planning had begun with the laying out of new towns or the reconstruction of towns destroyed by war, since that had revealed the need to take account of all the factors which might influence their development and the life of their inhabitants. In her view, over-all studies of that kind could be carried out by some of the under-developed countries with technical assistance from the United Nations. Such an undertaking might seem unduly ambitious at the current stage but, as they gained more experience in the matter, the United Nations and its specialized agencies would be able not only to assist Governments in that task but also to draw up international plans for countries in the same geographical area.

9. Those few observations in no way diminished the Guatemalan delegation's enthusiasm for the work carried out by the United Nations in the social field. She would, however, be glad to see the United Nations give special attention to the participation of women in community development. The human element was an essential factor in any community development project; the prime object was to make the people change their attitude, realize their social responsibilities and potentialities, and understand that the progress of a community depended above all on its own efforts. Women could play an especially important part in that connexion and the United Nations should try to encourage them to do so; at the same time it would be fulfilling one of its obligations, that of promoting respect for human rights.

10. In conclusion, she congratulated the United Nations on the seminar on the civic responsibilities and increased participation of Asian women in public life, which had been held at Bangkok in August, and hoped that it would be the first of a long series of such meetings, equally well organized and equally valuable.

11. Mrs. MIRONOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) wished first to refer to the question of international contacts, which had been examined in detail by a number of delegations including, in particular, that of Czechoslovakia. She noted with satisfaction that the Council and its subsidiary organs had approved a number of useful measures designed to promote cultural and scientific exchanges between the various countries of the world. However, although at the initiative of the Soviet Union the Council had at its twenty-fourth session adopted resolution 663 I (XXIV) on the development of personal contacts between specialists in social matters, the action it had taken in pursuance of Assembly resolution 1043 (XI) was clearly inadequate having regard to the extreme importance of that question. There was no need to dwell on the extent to which the establishment of closer links between peoples could contribute to the growth of mutual understanding, the improvement of relations between countries with different social and economic systems and the raising of the levels of

living of all peoples. The multiplication of such contacts was one of the guarantees of peaceful coexistence and it was the United Nations duty to give the matter continuous attention.

12. The Soviet Union for its part had taken a number of practical steps to strengthen its ties with other countries in the economic, social, cultural, tourist and other spheres. In recent years customs and administrative formalities had been considerably eased. The number of foreigners visiting the USSR increased every year. From about 92,000 in 1955 it had risen to 490,000 in 1956. In addition, nearly 560,000 Soviet citizens had visited 61 foreign countries. Scientific contacts had also increased. Nine hundred Soviet scientists had travelled abroad in 1956 and more than 700 during the first eight months of 1957. Where the Soviet Union had received only 360 foreign scientists in 1955, it had admitted 820 in 1956. Moreover, the Soviet people never failed to celebrate the anniversaries marking important advances in the development of science. Student exchanges were also increasing. During 1956 and 1957 nearly 14,500 foreign students had come to the USSR. In 1957, 1,632 of them had completed their higher studies in that country, while nearly 400 Soviet students had entered institutions of higher learning in other countries. Cultural and sports exchanges had also increased to an impressive degree and one of the most striking examples of fruitful international co-operation was the sixth World Youth Festival held in the Soviet Union in July and August 1957. Nearly 34,000 young men and women from 131 countries had attended the Festival, whose slogan had been "Peace and Friendship". The participants had had an opportunity of getting to know each other better and of clearing up possible misunderstandings. The Festival had thus contributed to the building of a better future. The young people of the Soviet Union had extended the warmest possible welcome to their guests and had spared no effort to make their stay in the Soviet Union agreeable. That example bore eloquent witness to the part which the USSR was playing in the fostering of intellectual and scientific contacts. Moreover, possibilities in that sphere were far from exhausted and the Soviet delegation considered that it was the General Assembly's duty to formulate specific recommendations inviting Member States to co-operate more actively in the work of bringing the peoples closer together. The Czechoslovak draft resolution (A/C.3/L.610), which she fully supported, would do much to expand international contacts. She hoped that it would win unanimous approval.

13. The reports on the world social situation were of great interest and they indicated the course to be followed in solving the urgent problems of interest to the United Nations. It was unfortunately apparent from the latest report that the world social situation as a whole was far from satisfactory and that much remained to be done, for the real improvements recorded in certain spheres were slight indeed in relation to the poverty and destitution still prevailing and to the existing possibilities. In most countries the progress made in the matter of social legislation was clearly inadequate; far too many people enjoyed no social benefits whatever at the current time. In some countries, far from increasing, the sums devoted to social services were being reduced and social conditions were often aggravated by discriminatory measures based on race, nationality, colour, language and the like.

14. She wished to point out some defects in the Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1) which she hoped the Secretariat would endeavour to remedy in the future. The figures on which the report was based were not always representative and many important problems were not dealt with at all. Although it mentioned the effects of atomic radiation on human health, the report unfortunately did no more than touch on that important question and the Council had not seen fit to make any positive pronouncement on it. Again, the report did not sufficiently bring out the enormous efforts made by the People's Republic of China in the matter of social improvement or the vigorous activity in that field of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Immense progress had nevertheless been made there in a very short space of time and it would clearly be useful to acquaint the rest of the world with the experience gained in those countries. In the Soviet Union virtually all social welfare costs were borne by the State. Education was free at all levels and workers were entitled to all social security benefits. The scourge of unemployment had been entirely eliminated and an ever-increasing proportion of the national income (three-quarters at the current time) was spent on the welfare of the people.

15. She stressed the importance of the work done by the Commission on the Status of Women and noted with satisfaction that the Convention on the Political Rights of Women had been signed and ratified by twenty-six States. That was not enough, however, and she hoped that States would soon carry out the recommendations in Council resolution 652 B (XXIV). One of the Commission's practical achievements was the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, which had been approved by the General Assembly (resolution 1040 (XI)). It was regrettable, however, that that instrument had so far been signed by only nineteen States, among them the Soviet Union.

16. A number of delegations had spoken of seminars to discuss problems connected with the status of women. Such meetings were of very great interest. In September 1956, the Soviet Union had organized an international seminar in which representatives of thirty-nine countries had taken part. They had discussed various questions connected with the movement to guarantee women equality of rights with men and they had had the opportunity of acquainting themselves with the position of women in the Soviet Union. It could be said without hesitation that the fruitful exchanges of views among the participants had done a great deal to promote the aims of the United Nations as set forth in the Charter. With regard to the regional seminar which had taken place at Bangkok, although she did not question its usefulness she nevertheless regretted that not all countries in the region had taken part in it and she hoped that in the future similar seminars would be attended by a greater number of countries.

17. The Soviet delegation wished to draw attention to the excellent proposal made in the Commission on the Status of Women by the Polish delegation, which had recommended that the possibility should be considered of convening a conference of women holding high Government posts.<sup>1/</sup> The USSR fully supported that

suggestion. The Soviet delegation considered that the convening of the seminar, despite its restricted nature, deserved to be supported. She expressed the hope that that useful measure would be carried out in the very near future and that it would be one of the first steps towards establishing closer contact between prominent women from various countries of the world.

18. Mr. MESSADI (Tunisia) welcomed the representatives of two nations which had recently achieved independence and become Members of the United Nations: Ghana and the Federation of Malaya. It should be a source of gratification to the members of the large and free United Nations family that several nations which had only recently been dependent had, like Tunisia, now attained their freedom and were embarking on an active international life, because that development illustrated the series of peaceful victories being won throughout the world by the noble principles and ideals of human progress, freedom, justice and peace. It should not be forgotten, however, that many peoples who were still dependent were at that moment struggling, in Algeria and elsewhere, to obtain recognition of their right to self-determination and to secure observance of human rights in their territory. The Tunisian delegation hoped that, through the exercise of good will by all the parties concerned and the efforts of the United Nations, those peoples would soon accede to independence and would play their part in joint endeavours to promote peace and human progress.

19. He was glad that the examination of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/3613) had been given a high place on the Committee's agenda. That examination gave countries which, like Tunisia, were not members of the Council an opportunity of expressing their views on the important matters with which that body dealt. The Tunisian Government's keen interest in the Council's work was the natural outcome of its desire to pursue an energetic policy of economic, social and cultural progress in Tunisia with a view to a steady improvement in levels of living for all its inhabitants. The young Tunisian Republic had to face serious economic, social and cultural problems. There was, first, lack of economic balance owing to the disruptive effect on the country's previous economic system of the invasion of colonial capitalism towards the end of the nineteenth century. Since the colonialists had been concerned exclusively with their own profits, their operations had not been constructive except in a very limited sector, and their influence had on the whole been harmful to the country. For example, large-scale imports of European manufactures had caused unemployment among the local working class; the peasant class had been subjected to the pressure of a market economy, but had not been given the means to increase production; the industrialization of the country, restricted by the colonial régime in order to avoid competition with industries in the metropolitan territory, had not made it possible to absorb surplus manpower, and production had not kept pace with the population's needs. The social situation in Tunisia was also partially due to the no less serious factor of population growth. A few figures would give an idea of the difficulties resulting from that growth: the regular annual rate of population growth was from 2 to 3 per cent, and out of a total population of 3,800,000 the number of unemployed in the economically active population was currently 335,000. In order to solve those problems, Tunisia would have to adapt itself

<sup>1/</sup> See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3, para. 48.

systematically to modern economic conditions, extend employment opportunities and increase the national income in order to eliminate unemployment and counteract the effects of population growth.

20. The Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/324/Rev.1) made it clear that social development was not proceeding at the same rate in all countries; it stressed the factors responsible for those differences but did not suggest any effective measures for their reduction. The problem was certainly difficult, but not insoluble. By pointing to the interdependence of economic and social factors, the Council's work had clearly shown how the goal of general social progress in all countries could be attained. By supplying under-developed countries with all the economic assistance they needed, the international community would make it possible for them to promote social progress. For that reason, the Tunisian delegation considered it important that the Council should complete its study of the proposed Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development as soon as possible and recommend the General Assembly to establish such a body. The work of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided an excellent illustration of the fact that the combined efforts of all nations were required for any truly worth-while humanitarian achievement by the United Nations. Once the Special Fund had been established, its first task should be to carry out studies of the economic situation and development programmes of under-developed countries in order to obtain comparable data, work out the most appropriate solutions, and thus ensure that the assistance granted should be put to the best possible use. If the establishment of the Special Fund was delayed, it would be advisable for the Council itself to undertake such studies by, for example, convening regional conferences of under-developed countries. That would make it possible for Governments to compare their policies and experience and to adopt the most effective solutions.

21. The Tunisian delegation regretted that the next report on the world social situation would not be published until 1963. The reports were excellent working tools for Governments and, in the absence of regional conferences, they could contribute to the evolution of an international policy of social development.

22. With regard to community development, the Tunisian delegation was of the opinion that that concept should be broadened and enriched so that such social action would embrace not only villages or rural communities, but also urbanized communities of migrants on the fringes of large cities. A number of experiments being conducted in Tunisia seemed to point to the fact that those communities provided as fertile a field of activity for community action as the villages, and that community action could be of great help in solving the problem of urbanization. Moreover, as it had been established that the process of community development involved the integration of two factors, the local communities on the one hand and Governments on the other, it was essential to make the need for such integration absolutely clear. The Council and the specialized agencies should set themselves that task. It would be useful to draw up programmes providing for the establishment of experimental centres, pilot projects, study centres, and centres for the training of personnel and specialized instructors in suit-

able areas. In the interests of improving and correcting the basic principles of community development, the Economic and Social Council should re-examine the question at frequent intervals, compare the results achieved and draw the necessary conclusions. Tunisia believed that the concept of community development was still fluid, but that its principles and objectives could nevertheless be precisely defined. Its purpose was to promote, through the combined efforts of the local community and the Government and the application of scientifically selected technical procedures, a degree of social, economic and cultural progress that would eventually transform the outlook, activities, social behaviour and living conditions of the individual. The aim, indeed, was to transform the human individual, and such a worth-while undertaking unquestionably deserved the full attention of United Nations bodies. The Tunisian delegation therefore believed that it was of the greatest importance that the specialized agencies should co-operate in training specialized community development teams. Experts from agencies such as UNESCO, WHO and FAO should be trained in community development and should be capable of making a concerted effort to achieve a common goal.

23. Regarding chapter VII, section IV, of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/3613), he said that his Government's participation in the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would be as extensive as its attachment to human rights was deep. The anniversary could not, of course, be celebrated in an atmosphere of unmixed rejoicing, as a number of countries still provided a sad spectacle of continual violations of the sacred rights of the individual. He would merely mention the tragic situation in which Algeria, a neighbour of Tunisia, found itself. An international organization, the International Commission against Concentration Camp Practices, had made a report to the President of the Council of Ministers of the French Republic which clearly showed that there had been many violations of fundamental human rights and freedom. The case of Algeria, which he had mentioned with no hostile intent towards the delegation in the Third Committee of a State which had given Tunisia its independence, was unfortunately not unique. Such situations were due to the fact that the right of peoples to self-determination was not yet recognized and respected by all States. The Tunisian delegation had already had the opportunity, at the eleventh session of the General Assembly, of stating its views on that question and of showing that the rights of the individual and the rights of peoples were interdependent and that any guarantee of the former was illusory unless the latter had also been defined and guaranteed. His delegation felt that the Third Committee should strive to advance the consideration of the recommendations concerning international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination which had been on the agenda since 1952. He trusted that the Committee would not disappoint the hopes of the peoples who were struggling for their freedom by again postponing or giving less than due attention to a question of such vital interest on which the peace and security of the world depended. He hoped that, in connexion with the tenth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations would be able to present the world with both the International Covenants on Human Rights and the recommendations concerning

international respect for the right of peoples and nations to self-determination, pending its eventual submission of a universal declaration of the rights of peoples and nations.

24. He had been able to refer to only a few of the questions dealt with in the report of the Economic and Social Council, which was a very valuable and informative document. The United Nations and the specialized agencies were certainly to be highly commended for their work. It could be said that mankind had made great progress in many spheres: maternal and child welfare - the sphere of activity of that admirable institution, UNICEF - social progress, the protection of human rights, the control of narcotics and the im-

provement of the status of women. But such progress had resulted in an increased awareness, rather than in practical action. Therefore, it was now for the United Nations to push forward from that new awareness it had helped to bring about towards practical achievements, to establish, for instance, the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development, without which all social progress might be halted, and to speed up the studies on human rights, particularly the right of peoples and nations to self-determination, on which it had been engaged for many years. That was the only way it could consolidate the results achieved.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.