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 MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Eduard MEZINCESCU (Romania).

**AGENDA ITEM 12**

**Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters V, VI and VII (section II, paragraph 645 only, and sections IV and V)) (A/4415) (continued)**

**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mrs. MANTZOULINOS (Greece) emphasized the useful purpose that could be served by the national advisory committees on human rights both in advising Governments and in enlightening the general public, and said that her delegation fully supported the initiative taken in that direction by the Commission on Human Rights and by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 772 B (XXX).
2. The Greek delegation appreciated the prompt action taken by the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in condemning all manifestations of racial prejudice and religious intolerance. It also endorsed the appreciation expressed by the members of the Economic and Social Council to the Special Rapporteur, who had drawn up the Study of Discrimination in the Matter of Religious Rights and Practices<sup>1/</sup> (E/CN.4/Sub.2/200).
3. Greece, which had been a beneficiary of UNICEF assistance since the end of the Second World War and had recently been elected a member of the Executive Board of that agency, was particularly well qualified to appreciate its achievements. A special tribute was due to the generosity of the people and Government of the United States in assisting UNICEF to carry out its task each year.
4. Referring to the various projects being carried out in Greece with UNICEF assistance, she drew particular attention to a new project, known as the Thessaly Plan, which was to mark the first phase of a nationwide plan for reorganization of the public health and social welfare services in rural areas. The project provided both for rural health demonstrations and for the training of public health personnel. It would also

make possible an increase in the number of mobile health units each of which was, at present, serving approximately fifty-five villages; those units paid special attention to maternal and child health and to sanitation. The Greek Government had allocated a considerable amount for the project, from which excellent results were anticipated.

5. Since it was anxious to see UNICEF activities expanded so as to enable it to accomplish its important task to the full, the Greek delegation had been gratified to learn that there was to be a systematic survey of children's needs all over the world. Moreover, the training programmes, both in public health and social services, were a necessary complement to the assistance furnished to national projects. With a view to publicizing UNICEF's work, PIKPA, the maternal and child health organization in Greece, had published a Greek edition of the UNICEF Bulletin and distributed 5,000 copies of it throughout Greece.

6. Concerning the activities of the Commission on the Status of Women, it would be recalled that at its fourteenth session that body had expressed the hope that one or more African Member States of the United Nations would seek membership on the Commission.<sup>2/</sup> It would, in fact, be very appropriate for African women to participate in discussions of the legal, social and humanitarian problems affecting women the world over and to place before the Commission those problems which were of particular concern to the women of Africa.

7. She briefly recalled the decisions which had led up to the preparation of a draft convention and draft recommendation on the minimum age of marriage, consent to marriage and registration of marriages,<sup>3/</sup> and pointed out that in submitting those two drafts the Secretary-General had clearly explained that the draft recommendation had been intended merely as a subsidiary instrument that would help to give effect to the convention. It was therefore regrettable that, at its fourteenth session, the Commission on the Status of Women had discussed at length whether it should opt for one or the other of those instruments and that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 771 C (XXX), had requested the Secretary-General to consult Governments on that subject. Experience showed that Governments were always inclined to prefer the less binding of two international instruments. The problem at issue was far too important for the United Nations to be content with a mere recommendation which did no more than paraphrase the article on marriage in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 16). Only the adoption of a convention to which, moreover, Governments would be free to accede or not, could enable the United Nations effectively to protect the individual

<sup>2/</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 7, chap. XV, resolution II A.

<sup>3/</sup> *Ibid.*, resolutions III A and III B.

<sup>1/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 60.XIV.2.

freedom and dignity of persons who wished to found a family that "natural and fundamental group unit of society".

8. Referring to the remarks made by the representative of Afghanistan at the 982nd meeting concerning Council resolution 771 H (XXX), she suggested that members of the Committee might urge their Governments to transmit to the Secretary-General all available data, as well as their comments, on programmes carried out with the assistance of the United Nations for the advancement of women in the under-developed countries. The Governments of countries in which women had obtained recognition of all their rights might inform the Secretary-General of their experience in that connexion.

9. In conclusion, she emphasized the importance of the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights and, in particular, of regional seminars on the participation of women in public life. It was highly desirable to make provision, as the Council had done in its resolution 773 A (XXX), for national and regional seminars on the rights of the child. International seminars would be useful only if held for the purpose of taking up questions already discussed in detail at the national and regional levels and to formulate principles and recommendations which had already been accepted at the other seminars.

10. Mr. COX (Peru) said that he wished, first of all, to express his pleasure at seeing the representatives of Cyprus and of the new African States take their seats in the United Nations. Their presence could not fail to promote international understanding and to help the United Nations win acceptance throughout the world for the spirit of co-operation and solidarity and for the social, humanitarian and cultural principles whose observance the Third Committee was trying to secure. For the Latin American countries the admission of the new African States to membership in the United Nations had particular significance because of the profound geographical and historical parallels between the two groups of countries.

11. While it was true that scientific progress and the efforts made by the United Nations in the field of technical assistance were constantly improving the lot of mankind, much still remained to be done before distress and misery disappeared from the face of the earth. Particular homage was due to persons who — like Mr. Schnyder, Chairman of the Executive Board of UNICEF, and Miss Henderson, Director of the Bureau of Social Affairs of the United Nations — were working to bring about a better world.

12. With regard to UNICEF, the statement by the Chairman of the Executive Board (982nd meeting) and the relevant documents before the Committee (A/4415, E/3304<sup>4/</sup> and E/3336<sup>5/</sup>) provided very useful information on what had already been achieved and on the projects still to be carried out. The history of UNICEF could be divided into three phases: in the first, interest had been focused mainly on children who had suffered from the war; in the second, long-term programmes for children had been carried out, especially in the under-developed countries; and in the third which had just begun, efforts would be made to put into effect the principles incorporated in the Declaration of the Rights

of the Child, which the General Assembly had adopted at its fourteenth session (resolution 1386 (XIV)) and which, far from being a useless paraphrase of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, would unquestionably be conducive to effective action. The task was immense; 600 million children living in the under-developed countries were in need of assistance, but only 55 million of them were at present receiving UNICEF aid. Nor should it be forgotten that in the next sixteen years some 2,000 million children would be born in the countries in question. All in all, to the extent of its limited resources, which amounted to only \$25 million a year—with the Governments benefiting from the assistance devoting, on an average, \$58 million a year to the programmes—UNICEF had done highly useful work. The Peruvian delegation would therefore support any draft resolution expressing approval of the activities of UNICEF; it also wished to draw attention to the generosity of certain Governments and, in particular, the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and Iran.

13. With regard to the work carried out by the United Nations in the social domain, he had listened with great interest to the statement made at the previous meeting by Miss Henderson, Director of the Bureau of Social Affairs, who had given a comprehensive picture of the social programmes and had stressed the inevitable repercussions on them that would result from the increase in population. He thanked the representative of Afghanistan for having requested (982nd meeting) that the complete text of Miss Henderson's statement should be circulated, because Governments would be able to derive highly useful information and advice from it. He felt that he could speak for all the delegations in thanking the members of the Committee on Programme Appraisals for their extremely useful report (E/3347/Rev.1).<sup>6/</sup> It might perhaps be advisable to adopt a resolution which would ensure that that document and Miss Henderson's statement would be widely circulated.

14. The report of the Committee on Programme Appraisals contained extremely interesting observations on the question of the interrelationship of economic and social factors of development. That question, which had been the subject of General Assembly resolution 1392 (XIV), assumed exceptional importance in the case of the under-developed countries where, for instance, pressure of population in the countryside and the lure of the city for the rural population resulted in the emergence of shanty-towns around urban areas where living conditions were appalling and thus apt to induce serious outbreaks of discontent. That was a problem which required urgent solution. Economic and social development could be achieved either by private initiative or by the State or, again—and that was the best solution in the view of the Peruvian delegation—by the two together. What was of paramount importance was to work towards improving the lot of all workers, both manual and non-manual.

15. In conclusion, he was happy to note that the United Nations Secretariat never lost sight of current

<sup>4/</sup> Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 2.

<sup>5/</sup> Ibid., Supplement No. 2A.

<sup>6/</sup> Five-Year Perspective, 1960-1964: consolidated report on the appraisals of the scope, trend and costs of the programmes of the United Nations, ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, WMO and IAEA in the economic, social and human rights fields (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 60.IV.14).

problems while remaining fully conscious of its present and future responsibilities.

Organization of work

16. Mr. BARODY (Saudi Arabia) thought that the delegations which intended to submit draft resolutions on the report of the Economic and Social Council would be well advised to do so as soon as possible. That would allow the representatives who did not wish to speak in the general debate to express at an early date their opinions on any specific proposal or proposals.

17. The CHAIRMAN shared that view and asked the delegations intending to submit draft resolutions to do so without delay.

18. Mr. FARHADI (Afghanistan) suggested that at its next meeting the Committee should fix a deadline for the submission of draft resolutions.

19. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee members to put forward proposals on that subject on Monday, 10 October.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.