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Chairman: Mr. Eduard MEZINCESCU (Romania).

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

**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, A/C.3/L.847/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.484/Rev.2, A/C.3/L.850/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.851/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.852/Rev.1) (continued)**

**CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (continued)**

1. The CHAIRMAN called upon representatives wishing to explain their votes on the draft resolutions adopted at the previous meeting.
2. Miss ORTIZ DE ZEVALLOS (Peru) said that her delegation had voted for the draft resolution on the advancement of women in developing countries (A/C.3/L.847/Rev.1) because her country was very interested and active in promoting women's rights. The Commission on the Status of Women was to be commended for its work and her country was prepared to cooperate fully with it in the implementation of the resolution.
3. Mr. KUNTOH (Ghana) stated that his delegation had asked for a separate vote on operative paragraph 2, as amended, of the Czechoslovak draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2) in order to register its reservation regarding the deletions effected in the operative part. As an alternative, it would much have preferred the amendment submitted by the Netherlands and Norway (A/C.3/L.858). It had nevertheless voted for the draft resolution as a whole.
4. Mr. CHANG (China) explained that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the Czechoslovak revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2) because it had

felt that the sponsor had been motivated by feelings of animosity for the Federal Republic of Germany. The allegations made against that country were unfounded and, furthermore, being political in nature, had no place in the Third Committee. While the amendments accepted by the sponsor had considerably improved the text, his delegation's misgivings had not been entirely dispelled.

5. Mr. DE VILLIERS (Union of South Africa) said that his delegation had welcomed the amendments to the Czechoslovak draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2) which had sought to achieve the prevention of all manifestations of racial and national hatred and not only manifestations of a particular kind. A basic aim of his Government was to avoid racial hatred in the country by assisting each of the groups concerned to achieve its highest aspirations within its own area. However, there had been a tendency during the discussion of the draft resolution to regard racial and national hatred as synonymous with policies directed at the avoidance of those evils. Because those implications had been introduced, his delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. But the Government of the Union of South Africa was firmly opposed to all forms of racial and national hatred, and when the resolution came to the vote in the General Assembly his delegation would determine its position in the light of the considerations he had mentioned.

6. Mrs. KUME (Japan) observed that her delegation had given its whole-hearted support to the revised draft resolution on the advancement of women in developing countries (A/C.3/L.847/Rev.1), which had taken into account the excellent proposals of the Polish delegation. It had also welcomed the Bolivian contributions to the revised draft resolution on the teaching of United Nations subjects (A/C.3/L.850/Rev.1), and had voted for it. The two other draft resolutions adopted at the previous meeting (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2, A/C.3/L.851/Rev.1) constituted important steps forward and had had her delegation's full support.

7. Mrs. MIRONOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled the importance her delegation attached to international co-operation and exchange of experience in the field of low-cost housing and thanked the sponsors of the draft resolution on the subject (A/C.3/L.851/Rev.1) for having incorporated some of its suggestions. For reasons it had stated earlier, her delegation could not endorse the instructions given to the Secretary-General under operative paragraph 2. It had therefore voted against that paragraph and had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution as a whole. It had, however, voted for those parts of the text with which it could agree.

8. Miss IMRU (Ethiopia) explained that her delegation had abstained in the vote on the Czechoslovak draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2), as amended, because the text had been considerably weakened. Discrimination had been condemned in a number of earlier reso-

lutions; the time had come to begin to seek actual solutions.

9. Mr. DUQUE GOMEZ (Colombia) said that while his delegation would have liked the problem of rural housing to have been mentioned in the ten-Power draft resolution (A/C.3/L.851/Rev.1), it had nevertheless voted for that text. It had also supported the draft resolution on the teaching of United Nations subjects (A/C.3/L.850/Rev.1), although it regretted that the Bolivian suggestion regarding the use of radio for remote areas had not been incorporated. His delegation was furthermore gratified that operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution on the advancement of women (A/C.3/L.847/Rev.1) had been retained intact. It hoped that the study mentioned therein would be very comprehensive and would set out definite recommendations. With respect to the Czechoslovak revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2), for which his delegation had voted, he associated himself with the remarks made by the Uruguayan representative at the 997th meeting.

10. Mr. SUTANTO (Indonesia) said that Indonesia, which was doing its utmost to disseminate information about the United Nations both in and out of its schools, had supported the fifteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.3/L.850/Rev.1). It had also voted for the Czechoslovak revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2), believing that to be its duty as a Member of the United Nations.

11. Begum Aziz AHMED (Pakistan) remarked that although the Czechoslovak draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2) had, through being amended, become acceptable to the large majority of delegations, the final text was not the one her delegation would have preferred. In that respect it shared the disappointment voiced by several other delegations.

12. As regards the draft resolution on the advancement of women (A/C.3/L.847/Rev.1), her delegation had voted to retain operative paragraph 1 intact. In that way the resolution would not prejudice the study already undertaken by the Secretary-General. She hoped that no technical obstacles would be raised to delay the provision of the assistance requested.

13. Lady TWEEDSMUIR (United Kingdom) explained that her delegation had voted for the Czechoslovak revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2) on the understanding that the word "violations" in operative paragraph 1 was used in a moral and not in a legal sense and that the manifestations in question were therefore to be regarded as violations of the spirit of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

14. Mrs. AFNAN (Iraq) said that her delegation, which had voted for the Czechoslovak revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.848/Rev.2), understood the concern of delegations which had regretted the deletion of the clause calling upon Governments to submit reports to the Economic and Social Council. Since, however, the United Nations had no means of enforcing such an appeal, it was unlikely that many Governments would respond, particularly those that practised discrimination as a national policy. In its present form, moreover, the draft resolution had behind it the authority of a very large majority and might well be adopted unanimously by the General Assembly. It should be of great value for further United Nations action in the field.

15. Her delegation wished to reiterate its request that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities should look into the situation of the Arab minority in Israel. Evidence of discrimination against Arabs was to be found in many sources. One Israel weekly publication had reported that Jewish children were taught in school and in the home to hate Arabs. A United States Catholic weekly magazine had suggested that Israel laws on race and religion were akin to Nazi legislation; one law stated that children of mixed marriages must be registered according to the religion and nationality of the mother, so that the child of a Catholic father and a Jewish mother had to be declared Jewish.

16. Mrs. ESHEL (Israel), exercising her right of reply, said that there was freedom of the Press in her country and that her Government was consequently not responsible for the reports of tendentious publications. Where the law on the determination of religion was concerned, that provision affected many more Jewish than non-Jewish families in Israel and many people were opposed to it. One thing was certain, however: no discrimination against any sector of the population was involved.

17. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that in accordance with its decision taken at the 994th meeting the five-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.852/Rev.1) would be discussed after the First Committee had concluded its debate on item 88 (Africa: a United Nations programme for independence and development).

#### AGENDA ITEM 33

##### Assistance to refugees:

(a) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/4378/Rev.1 and Add.1, A/4415, chapter V, section IV)

##### STATEMENT BY THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

18. The CHAIRMAN welcomed the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and congratulated him on the progress made by his Office during the year under review with regard to the international protection of refugees and the programme of permanent solutions. He was happy to note that under that programme, the three solutions of repatriation, integration and resettlement were all being applied. He also welcomed the assistance extended by the High Commissioner's Office to the refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia. The High Commissioner would be missed when he left the Office at the end of the year.

19. Mr. LINDT (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that his Office had two important tasks, the international protection of refugees and the provision of assistance where necessary. Every refugee must be given sufficient legal protection to ensure his enjoyment of certain minimum rights, and the High Commissioner's Office was helping to create a network of international instruments for that purpose. Its centre-piece was the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees,<sup>1/</sup> which provided a minimum

<sup>1/</sup>United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons, held at Geneva, Switzerland, from 2 to 25 July 1951, Final Act and Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 51.IV.4).

standard of treatment. Three more countries, Greece, New Zealand and Yugoslavia, had ratified the Convention during the year and four more, Argentina, Brazil, Portugal and Turkey, were about to do so, thus bringing the number of signatories up to twenty-nine. The Office had also been successful in stimulating the introduction of provisions favourable to refugees in other international treaties and in national laws and regulations.

20. All those provisions remained meaningless, however, unless a bona fide refugee who crossed a frontier was granted asylum and was thus protected against deportation. The granting of asylum was a sovereign right of States and it was for the authorities of the country of first asylum to determine who was entitled to the status of refugee under the Convention, but his Office endeavoured to see that decisions on refugee status followed a consistent and humanitarian pattern in all the different States.

21. The indemnification of refugees under the High Commissioner's mandate who had suffered Nazi persecution was a very important part of the Office's protective work. Some refugees, who had been persecuted by reason of their nationality, had felt strongly that they were discriminated against compared with other refugees. He was glad to announce that on 5 October 1960, an agreement had been signed by his Office and the Federal Republic of Germany in favour of such refugees. The agreement provided, first, that those refugees who had suffered permanent injury to body or health would be entitled to compensation on the same scale as refugees who had been persecuted for racial or political reasons and, secondly, that the Federal Government would place a sum of approximately \$10.7 million at the disposal of the Office for the establishment of a fund for additional assistance to those refugees and their surviving dependants, on the basis of need rather than of a legal claim to indemnification. In its administration of the fund, his Office would co-operate with interested voluntary agencies and refugee organizations.

22. To ensure effective legal protection would require a sustained effort, all the more so because the number of refugees requiring protection tended to diminish more slowly than the number of non-settled refugees. In Europe alone 870,000 refugees still required protection in 1960. The rate of decrease had been speeded up by special governmental measures to facilitate the naturalization of refugees. Countries which did not recognize the jus soli should ensure that a status as precarious as that of refugee was not passed on from parents to children.

23. The refugee must have the right freely to choose his future, and that included the privilege of changing his mind. If he voluntarily decided to be repatriated or to avail himself anew of the protection of his country of nationality, he must be helped to do so.

24. Fortunately, the great majority of the refugees under the protection of his Office were economically self-sufficient. It was only for non-settled refugees that a question of international material assistance arose. The refugee problem was so enormous that priorities had to be established in seeking solutions. The first priority must be assistance to individuals or groups of refugees in danger of starvation. If a great wave of refugees sought asylum in a country, that country must not be left to shoulder the burden

alone. His Office had had to deal with such a situation during the Hungarian refugee movement of 1956-1957, but that problem was now virtually solved.

25. In North Africa, on the other hand, the problem still existed. Over 200,000 refugees from Algeria were living in Morocco and Tunisia, where their presence increased the strain imposed by the process of industrialization. During the year under review, the joint operation of the League of Red Cross Societies and the High Commissioner's Office, in co-operation with the Moroccan and Tunisian Red Crescent Societies, had succeeded in considerably improving the living conditions of those refugees. The distribution of monthly rations had become regular and clothing and blankets were being distributed at the present time. The Governments of Tunisia and Morocco had, with great generosity, allowed the refugees to benefit from their health and educational services, which the League of Red Cross Societies and his Office had strengthened. In order to improve the feeding of children, who comprised one-half of that refugee group, provision had been made for the distribution of reconstituted milk from forty-one milk centres in Morocco and seventy-one in Tunisia and it was hoped that the number of centres would be increased considerably by the end of the year. Mobile and stationary clinics and multi-purpose centres, which had been begun as an experimental project in Tunisia, provided health care, milk and hot meals and education.

26. A very disquieting problem was the assault made on the human dignity of the refugee by prolonged idleness and dependence on charity. Both Morocco and Tunisia had a considerable degree of unemployment and under-employment and therefore, although refugees were permitted to work, it was difficult for them to earn a living. A few occupational projects had been started in co-operation with the Governments concerned, but they could benefit only a small number of refugees. However, according to a psychiatrist who had studied the mental health of refugee groups in many countries, the mental health of the refugees in Morocco and Tunisia was considerably better than that of refugees in other parts of the world, presumably because they were not isolated in camps but allowed to share the life of the society which had taken them in.

27. The League of Red Cross Societies was to be congratulated on its efficiency and resourcefulness. Unfortunately, its Executive Committee had adopted a resolution on 7 October deciding that its participation in the joint operation would terminate on 30 June 1961, with the proviso that it could be extended if no satisfactory alternative arrangements had been completed by that time. He expressed the hope that the League would see its way to extending its participation in the joint operation. His Office, in any event, felt bound by the pertinent General Assembly resolutions to continue the relief operation as long as the need existed.

28. International protection alone would not assure permanent solutions for those refugees who remained after an emergency situation had subsided. Although the international community could not bear the total cost of such assistance, it could provide a valuable stimulus which released other resources. The programmes which the Office had started in 1955 had drawn substantial matching contributions from national funds. The results had been very encouraging. In 1955, there had been 252,000 non-settled refugees

in Europe, living both in and outside camps, but there would be no more than 75,000 by the end of 1960, even though 238,000 new refugees had arrived during the five-year period.

29. At the beginning of 1955, the number of refugees living in camps had been reduced to 85,000 but those remaining had been hard to resettle. A determined effort had been made from 1958 onwards to evacuate all refugees under his mandate from official camps. By the end of 1960, the camp population should fall to 13,800. Of those remaining, 10,500 persons, in Germany, Austria and Italy, qualified for the camp clearance programme of the Office.

30. The sum of over \$3 million which had been needed a year previously for the camp clearance programme had been provided, thanks to World Refugee Year. All the agreements for ensuring camp clearance would be signed before the end of the year and implemented in 1961.

31. By the beginning of 1961, there would be no refugees in camps in Greece, thanks largely to the untiring efforts of the Greek Minister of Social Welfare. There should be none in Austria and Italy by the end of 1961, but it would take some time longer to clear the camps in Germany.

32. Those refugees, however, included about 1,200 persons who had sunk into apathy or were revolting from accepted social standards and who could not, therefore, be integrated into a normal community in their present state. The Office's mental health adviser had worked out rehabilitation measures for those refugees which might extend in some cases beyond 1962. However, those people should by then be living outside camps. Although camp life was depressing, courage was needed to leave a relatively sheltered existence for an uncertain adventure in a competitive world. He had wondered whether refugees should always be encouraged to leave, but had come to the conclusion that the children should be given a chance to grow up in normal surroundings.

33. There were still 3,300 refugees living in camps who did not come under the camp clearance programme. Of those, 650 were Hungarians who had arrived during 1956-1957. Most of them were covered by the programme for the integration of Hungarian refugees in Austria and some might still adopt voluntary repatriation or emigration as a solution. The rest of the refugees were of more recent standing and their number had been declining for the past two years. That meant that permanent solutions were being found not only for the small yearly influx but also for many of the older refugees. If that quick rotation could be maintained, all that would be needed for the refugees under the Office's mandate in Europe would be reception centres. The Austrian Government's plan for housing former refugees who had become naturalized Austrian citizens had been of assistance in clearing camps and he had extended his good offices to obtain some of the necessary financing from international sources.

34. The problem of non-settled refugees living outside camps had assumed manageable proportions. Their number had dropped from 167,000 in 1955 to 61,000 at present. If the drop had not been greater, that was because the Office had been concentrating its efforts on camp clearance. Thanks to the funds made available by World Refugee Year, the first attack on the

problem could be made and it could be continued in 1961 if the target of \$6 million was met. The important additional funds received by the voluntary agencies as a result of World Refugee Year for projects in Europe would further increase the impact of those measures. He was deeply grateful to the voluntary agencies for their assistance and co-operation.

35. The programmes for non-settled refugees living outside camps in Europe, including Turkey, concentrated on clearly defined objectives. In countries with fully developed economies and social security systems, the programme was limited to handicapped refugees. Some refugees could be settled merely with the aid of counselling regarding such matters as employment possibilities and social benefits. In States in a less satisfactory position economically where the number of non-settled refugees was small, the Office engaged in a comprehensive country clearance programme which should provide a complete solution for a given country, if the necessary funds were forthcoming, within two or three years.

36. It might be said that there was no permanent solution for all refugees. Like other human beings, they might fall back into misery through their own fault or ill fortune, but it would be wrong to lead a refugee to expect help forever, merely because he was a refugee. He must understand that once he had been helped to get established, he must fend for himself like other people.

37. Provided that there was no new influx of refugees, the solution of the problem of the refugees under the Office's mandate in Europe was in sight. That had been brought about in a number of ways. The Office had encouraged voluntary repatriation. Integration had been facilitated by economic developments in many European countries, which were now suffering from a shortage of manpower. Lastly, the emigration of handicapped refugees had been greatly increased owing to revolutionary developments in medicine and other fields. Although some countries, such as the Scandinavian countries, had considered it their humanitarian duty to take in handicapped refugees, it was not until World Refugee Year that overseas countries, such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand, had accepted a significant number of such refugees. At present 7 per cent of the handicapped refugees had a chance to emigrate, compared with less than 1 per cent in 1952 to 1955, and the percentage would probably rise as a result of new legislation in the United States. The valuable seminar on the integration of refugees organized by the Swedish Government had shown that modern methods of treatment and rehabilitation could make useful citizens of handicapped persons. The tragedy of the refugee family which could not abandon a handicapped member and was therefore obliged to refuse offers of resettlement was becoming a thing of the past. Furthermore, immigration regulations were becoming more liberal in several countries. Australia had raised the age limit for refugees recruited under labour programmes and Canada had announced its intention of selecting refugees without regard to occupational classification. Many countries, with Australia, Canada and Brazil in the forefront, had been raising the percentage of refugees admissible under their general immigration programmes.

38. The Office's programme for refugees of European origin living in the Far East also benefited from the new developments and was being conducted, as in the

past, in close co-operation with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM). There was a general shift of the refugee problem away from Europe. His Office remained flexible in its approach and was ready to assist refugees within its mandate in any part of the world without distinction of race or creed. Its legal protection could apply only to those refugees, but he was authorized to use his good offices to assist other refugees, such as the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong and more generally, refugees not within the competence of the United Nations, by such means as channelling funds or opening resettlement opportunities. That was a very encouraging development.

#### GENERAL DEBATE

39. Mrs. MANTZOULINOS (Greece) paid a warm tribute to the High Commissioner, whose achievements in the many fields referred to in his report (A/4378/Rev.1 and Add.1) and in his statement had more than justified the confidence placed in him.

40. Evidence of the steady progress which had been achieved since the inception of the High Commissioner's Programme was provided by the change from concentration on emergency measures for refugees to the present stress on activities designed to provide permanent solutions for them. She noted with satisfaction the efforts to stimulate the introduction of provisions favourable to refugees both in international treaties and in national laws and regulations. The general concern to ensure that refugees were afforded equal opportunities with nationals, *inter alia*, through vocational and professional integration projects, training and educational projects and projects to assist handicapped households, all of which were aspects of the scheme for the rehabilitation of refugees, were in her opinion most worth-while investments.

41. Her Government attached the great importance to the solution of the refugee problem in Greece, irrespective of whether the refugees came under the High Commissioner's mandate or not. The Greek Government's five-year plan for the economic development of the country, which was already in operation, made provision for the rehabilitation of all refugees in Greece, a considerable sum being allocated for the purpose in the national budget.

42. Turning specifically to those refugees in Greece who fell within the High Commissioner's mandate, she supplemented the information provided in the latter's report by data supplied by the Greek Ministry of Social Welfare. The camp clearance programme, which had been carried to a successful conclusion through the valuable co-operation of the High Commissioner, had started in 1956. It had involved projects relating to urban rehabilitation, including housing and the professional establishment of refugees, rural rehabilitation, including housing and equipment for settlement on the land and vocational training and academic education, while difficult cases had received

special treatment. In addition, loans had been made to refugee families for housing or professional help, for the founding of community centres and the like.

43. Where the rural rehabilitation projects for refugees were concerned, eighty-four out of the 100 families to be settled had already been transferred to the rural communities concerned, and all the construction work had been completed. In the case of the urban rehabilitation programmes, by the end of 1960, 3,444 persons out of a total of 8,470 entitled to do so would have benefited from the housing programmes. The other projects to which she had referred were achieving very satisfactory results.

44. Since the camp clearance programme had been completed, allocations from the High Commissioner's Programme for 1961 were to be used for assistance to non-settled refugees living outside camps, preference being given to the handicapped. Those refugees were displaced persons who had arrived in Greece in large numbers after the Second World War and who had received a warm welcome.

45. Greece, which also made an annual financial contribution to the High Commissioner's Office and to UNRWA, hoped that the High Commissioner would continue to assist it in the solution of its remaining refugee problem.

46. Mr. RIBEIRO DA CUNHA (Portugal) congratulated the High Commissioner on his excellent report.

47. Portugal, as was well known, had always opened its frontiers to refugees. During the Second World War many foreigners from all over Europe had found shelter in Portugal, while others had passed through the country "en route" to various destinations. In 1956, nearly 18,000 children had been brought to Portugal by a Portuguese charitable organization and welcomed in Portuguese families, and again in 1960 many people had fled to Portuguese soil in other parts of the world; all, irrespective of colour or race, had been welcomed.

48. His Government was giving careful consideration to the question of making a contribution to the High Commissioner's Programme, but it had very heavy expenses on behalf of the refugees in Portuguese territory. It had not so far asked the High Commissioner's Office to assist in the solution of the problem, although it hoped to receive help from it in the future.

49. He drew attention to the fact that the largest single non-governmental contribution to the High Commissioner for 1959 had come from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, while the Portuguese National Committee for World Refugee Year had been so successful that it had been decided to extend its activities for an additional period of two months. He was also happy to announce that Portugal had acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.