

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

FIFTEENTH SESSION

Official Records

**THIRD COMMITTEE, 1049th
MEETING**

Wednesday, 7 December 1960,
at 11 a.m.



NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 83:</i>	
<i>Main trends of inquiry in the natural sciences, dissemination of scientific knowledge and application of such knowledge for peaceful ends (concluded)</i>	341
<i>Agenda item 35:</i>	
<i>Draft Convention on Freedom of Information (concluded)</i>	343

Chairman: Mr. Eduard MEZINCESCU (Romania).

AGENDA ITEM 83

Main trends of inquiry in the natural sciences, dissemination of scientific knowledge and application of such knowledge for peaceful ends (A/4461,* A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) (concluded)

1. Mr. COX (Peru) observed that the survey of the main trends of inquiry in the field of the natural sciences, the dissemination of scientific knowledge and the application of such knowledge for peaceful ends (E/3362 and Corr.1 and Add.1) made a positive contribution to the progress and well-being of the international community. The survey was in no sense a routine piece of work. It was of the utmost importance, since through it the objective conclusions of scientists and experts in specialized fields of knowledge would become available to all countries. It was a masterly study, which should, however, be considered not a goal in itself but a starting point. It provided guidance for possible future action and in its recommendations indicated certain subjects which were particularly suitable for international study and which did not appear to be receiving sufficient attention at the present time. He strongly supported the measures recommended in the survey which were designed so to direct scientific activity that it would advance not only human knowledge in general but also the economic and social welfare of the world's population.

2. Because he believed that the mission of the United Nations, which was to promote the progress of mankind, would be served by following the course outlined in the survey, he would support the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1).

3. Mr. DJOHAN (Indonesia) said that his delegation had given its whole-hearted support to General Assembly resolution 1260 (XIII) because it had believed that the outstanding scientific and technologi-

cal achievements of the past fifty years offered limitless opportunities for raising the levels of living of the less developed countries and for benefiting all mankind, if they could only be co-ordinated and applied to the solution of the most urgent problems.

4. It was the unique paradox of the present age that although man had broken the sound barrier and penetrated into outer space, two-thirds of the world's population still lived in hardship and privation. The ever-growing gap between the level of living of the less developed and the economically advanced countries was the most crucial of all the problems confronting the international community today. Unfortunately, the continued advances in science and technology redounded primarily to the benefit of the economically advanced countries, thereby contributing to the problem. It was moreover a tragedy that so much of man's scientific knowledge, energy and resources was devoted to the perfection of weapons which presaged only the annihilation of mankind.

5. The survey (E/3362 and Corr.1 and Add.1) made plain the immense potential benefits of the use of scientific knowledge for peaceful purposes. It provided a standard of reference that could be used throughout the world and should be given the widest possible circulation. He accordingly supported the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1), which had been improved by the incorporation of the Saudi Arabian amendments (A/C.3/L.893) and the Czechoslovak amendment (A/C.3/L.895).

6. He particularly appreciated the emphasis laid in the survey on the interaction between the stimulation of scientific research and economic and social progress, and on the problem of applying the latest techniques to the industrialization of the less developed countries. Scientific and technological discoveries had played a major role in the economic growth and social development of the industrialized countries and they could do the same for the less developed countries. The survey made it clear that to achieve the transition from scientific research to industrial technology in order to solve the industrialization problems of the less developed countries was a collective responsibility of the international community. It also recognized that there was need for an agency which would concentrate on the international aspects of technology, applied research and industrial developments, and he hoped that serious attention would be given to that recommendation. The Committee for Industrial Development, established by Economic and Social Council resolution 751 (XXIX), might perhaps serve the purpose if its terms of reference were broadened. The survey further emphasized the serious overlapping and duplication of effort which now occurred in scientific research. He believed that the survey would assist in the eventual solution of the problem, which called for wider dissemination of scientific information and intensified international co-operation. How fruitful such co-

* Note by the Secretary-General transmitting document E/3622 and Corr.1 and Add.1.

operation could be had been demonstrated by the International Geophysical Year.

7. Man had reached the most crucial stage in his entire history. The tremendous increase in scientific knowledge could be used to open the door to an age of peace and prosperity for all peoples or to plunge the world into chaos and destruction. He hoped that the action taken as a result of the survey would ensure that scientific knowledge was used for good and not for evil.

8. Mr. REDZIC (Yugoslavia) said that the competent Yugoslav institutions had reported favourably on the survey (E/3362 and Corr.1 and Add.1). He accordingly considered it useful that the Economic and Social Council should examine it in detail and that all Governments, international agencies and non-governmental organizations should give the widest publicity to it.

9. His delegation attached particular importance to international co-operation in the field covered by the survey, and particularly to the exchange of scientific experiences between the economically developed and the under-developed countries, since such an exchange would facilitate the attainment of balanced economic and social development in individual countries and in the world in general.

10. He believed that the proposals contained in the eight-Power draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) were useful. The Czechoslovak amendment (A/C.3/L.895), which had been incorporated in it, had improved the text by requesting the Economic and Social Council to recommend concrete measures. In his delegation's view, it would be desirable for the General Assembly to review periodically the general problems of scientific research and international co-operation in the field of the natural sciences.

11. Mr. EL-ERIAN (United Arab Republic) welcomed the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) and stressed the importance of international co-operation for the advancement of scientific research in the natural sciences and the dissemination of scientific knowledge.

12. His country, which was facing tremendous problems in its economic development and social advancement, was making great efforts to catch up in the field of the natural sciences. Two important steps had been taken in the past few years: a national centre for scientific research had been established and a radioactive isotope centre had been set up under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency. He recalled that the President of the United Arab Republic had, at the 873rd plenary meeting of the General Assembly, referred to the determination of the developing countries not to miss the era of atomic energy with its unlimited potentialities as they had missed the era of steam and the era of electricity. International co-operation in the field of the natural sciences would help those countries to achieve their aim. The International Geophysical Year and the Agreement on the Peaceful Uses of the Antarctic showed what would be done through international co-operation to utilize the present achievements of science for peaceful purposes.

13. Miss DOBSON (Australia) said that the co-sponsors of the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) had decided to make two minor changes in the text. The word "development" in the

first preambular paragraph should be replaced by the word "progress", and in operative paragraph 3 (a) the word "especially" should be inserted between the word "and" and the words "for accelerating". The first change took into account suggestions made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia and France and the second a suggestion of the Israel representative. She hoped that the revised text, which incorporated the Saudi Arabian amendments (A/C.3/L.893) and the Czechoslovak amendment (A/C.3/L.895), would meet with unanimous approval.

14. Mrs. LEFLEROVA (Czechoslovakia) expressed satisfaction that the co-sponsors of the draft resolution had agreed to incorporate her amendment in their text.

15. Miss MacENTEE (Ireland) said that she would be speaking from the point of view of a lay observer, as she had not yet received the comments of the experts in Ireland. The survey (E/3362 and Corr.1 and Add.1) was, however, addressed primarily to the layman and the lucid drafting and admirable layout made it eminently readable.

16. It was understandable that the survey should concentrate primarily on the applied sciences, since it was implied in General Assembly resolution 1260 (XIII) that the material circumstances of the age were such that too academic an approach might seem cynical. It would, however, be a great pity if the Committee were to appear to ignore the importance of pure science. The distinction between pure and applied science was to some extent artificial; pure curiosity preceded concrete discovery and it was important that it should not be stifled with a plethora of technical assignments. Secondly, pure science was a valuable intellectual discipline; the ideal scientist had a passion for truth, respect for facts, reasoning power, patience and courage, qualities which were essential in every aspect of life today. Thirdly, in many institutions pure science was made to play the role of Cinderella; Governments and private agencies endowed fields of research whose utility was proven and were reluctant to invest in others which showed no immediate prospect of material return. To sum up, since pure science was the fountainhead of all scientific development, she thought there was room for a specific recommendation reminding Governments and private agencies of the need to encourage it. That could be done under the terms of the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) when the survey came up for final consideration. She would not have been able to vote in favour of the Czechoslovak amendment (A/C.3/L.895) in its original form, but she welcomed it as part of the draft resolution, which she would support in the confidence that it took into account the points that she had raised.

17. Mr. BOUQUIN (France) remarked that he had consulted the Saudi Arabian representative with regard to certain points in the French text of the Saudi Arabian amendments (A/C.3/L.893) which were causing him difficulty. They had accordingly agreed on the replacement of the word "development" by the word "progress" in both the English and the French texts, a change which was now reflected in the first preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. In addition, the words "continuent à jouer en favorisant" in the French text had been replaced by the words "continueront à favoriser". That change did not affect the English version.

18. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) thanked the French representative for his drafting suggestions and the sponsors of the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) for having accepted them. He entirely approved of replacing the word "development" in the first preambular paragraph by the word "progress", which implied development in conditions of peace.

19. Mr. FARHADI (Afghanistan) expressed his gratification at the spirit of co-operation and conciliation that had resulted in a text which he believed would command the Committee's unanimous support.

20. Mr. RUDA (Argentina) noted that the corrections made in the French text of the draft resolution were equally valid for the Spanish text and he therefore proposed that the first preambular paragraph should be altered to read:

"Considerando que las ciencias exactas y naturales en general siguen desempeñando un importante papel en el progreso económico y social de la humanidad,".

21. Speaking for the sponsors of the draft resolution, he stated that in the Spanish text the words "exactas y" should also be inserted before the word "naturales" in operative paragraphs 3 (a) and (b).

22. Mr. PERERA (Ceylon) said that while his delegation supported the draft resolution and the verbal changes made in it, it was not particularly pleased with the use of the term "less developed countries" in operative paragraph 3 (a). He deplored the tendency to categorize countries as "developed" or "underdeveloped", or, to use the currently favoured term, "less developed". The distinction was undesirable "less developed". The distinction was undesirable and he hoped that in future it would be avoided wherever possible. The present instance offered a good example, for the action being taken by the United Nations was intended to ensure that science—the common possession of all mankind—brought all nations to the same general level of development. Another fact that should be borne in mind was that science was acquiring a marked political aspect, as could be seen from the results of the International Geophysical Year and from the issues arising in connexion with the exploration of outer space.

23. Mr. PEAL (Liberia) associated himself with previous commendations of the survey (E/3362 and Corr.1 and Add.1). People in countries like his own, however, would not have a very easy time reading the survey, as they lacked the necessary scientific background and training. He therefore looked forward to the report which the Economic and Social Council was to submit to the General Assembly on the subject and hoped that the Council would endeavour to make practical recommendations which countries like his own could readily evaluate and, with the necessary assistance, put into effect.

24. His delegation would be happy to vote for the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) and was particularly gratified that the text had not become a matter for controversy. That fact bore witness to the genuine universality of the subject and to the Committee's ability to agree unanimously on matters involving the search for the truth.

25. Miss ADDISON (Ghana) said that her country, although young in statehood and scientific achieve-

ment, was profoundly interested in the development of science. The sciences were widely taught in secondary schools in her country and a science teachers' association had been founded. Her delegation therefore supported the eight-Power draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1) and thanked the Australian delegation for its initiative in the matter. It further associated itself with comments made by the UNESCO representative at the 1046th meeting regarding the recommendations appearing in the survey (E/3362 and Corr.1 and Add.1), especially those relating to the international collection and dissemination of scientific information.

26. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the eight-Power revised draft resolution (A/C.3/L.854/Rev.1), as it had been amended in the course of the meeting.

The eight-Power revised draft resolution, as amended, was adopted unanimously

27. Mrs. MANTZOULINOS (Greece) observed that her Government would consider the survey and the recommendations it contained with the attention they deserved.

28. Her country had two years earlier established an atomic energy centre, operated by staff trained mainly in the United States and devoted primarily to scientific work for medical and other peaceful purposes. Moreover, in 1959 the King and Queen of Greece had taken the initiative in founding a natural sciences and research institute as a branch of the National Institute of Greece. Her country was deeply concerned with scientific progress for peaceful ends, and believed that international co-operation in that sphere could be of very great service to mankind.

Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 35

Draft Convention on Freedom of Information (A/AC.42/7 and Corr.1, annex; A/3868 and Add.1-8, A/4173 and Corr.1 and Add.1-3, A/4401, A/C.3/L.889) (concluded)**

29. Miss HAMPTON (New Zealand), Rapporteur, recalled that several delegations had questioned the manner in which the Philippine draft resolution (A/C.3/L.889) regarding a draft Protocol to the draft Convention on Freedom of Information should be treated in the Committee's report. She suggested that the report should state that the Committee had received a draft resolution from the Philippine representative embodying a proposal for a draft Protocol and that, although various delegations had commented on the proposal, lack of time had prevented the Committee from considering it at the current session; the report would state further that the Philippine delegation had reserved its right to raise the matter again at the proper time.

** Resumed from the 1045th meeting.

30. Mr. EL-ERIAN (United Arab Republic) said that his delegation, which had made certain observations on the Philippine draft resolution, found the wording suggested by the Rapporteur quite satisfactory.

31. The CHAIRMAN stated that, as there were no objections, some such wording would be used in the report.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.