

1971. Due to its success, it had been followed by six similar seminars. The Mount Carmel International Centre for Community Development, in Haifa, ran intensive international courses devoted to a specific aspect of development with special emphasis on the role of women, particularly rural women. Many of its programmes were being carried out in co-operation with United Nations specialized agencies, including the ILO, FAO, WHO and UNESCO.

74. In her delegation's view, equality in job opportunities should begin in the United Nations. However, women in positions of responsibility and decision-making within the Secretariat were still few and far between. The appointment of a woman Assistant Secretary-General was gratifying, but the uniqueness of the event pointed up the unsatisfactory general situation. Her delegation was aware of the problems posed by the need to pay attention to both equitable geographical distribution and wider employment of women, but that awareness should not lead to acquiescence. It would seem that the difficulty applied more to the recruitment of new staff members than to promotion. It was incongruous that there were only 10 women in the category of principal officers and above out of a total of 298 such posts. Similarly, the number of women already employed in the Secretariat who were qualified for professional posts was higher than the number of women who actually held such posts. Her delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would take note of the situation.

75. Israel supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.2113/Rev.1.

76. Mr. ELTAYEB (Sudan) said that development and state-building were accorded top priority in many developing countries but neither could be achieved without the active participation of women. The real measure of development was not *per capita* income but the ability to

respond to modern needs; it entailed adaptation and innovation not only in the political but also in the economic, social and cultural fields. Women had a role to fulfil in all those fields and his Government had striven to create a climate in which Sudanese women would be encouraged to realize their full potential.

77. Under the Constitution every citizen was entitled to an education and efforts had been made to increase the number of schools throughout the country. Sudanese women enjoyed all political rights on an equal footing with men and were represented in the People's Assembly as well as in local councils. There was even a specialized Women's Secretariat in the Sudanese Socialist Union, the highest political organization in the country. The Public Service Law, promulgated by the May Revolution of 1969, had established the obligations and privileges of working women on an equal footing with men; they included equal pay for equal work and equal access to employment. Continuing efforts were being made by all Government services to bring those rights to the knowledge of people in rural as well as in urban areas, for awareness was the best guarantee of the rights of all citizens, both men and women.

78. His delegation fully supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.2113, of which it was a sponsor, for it believed that political, economic and social issues could not be solved without the participation of women, who accounted for 51 per cent of the world's population. The Sudan would welcome the opportunity to host regional seminars and conferences in connexion with the International Women's Year; indeed, various organizations in the Sudan were already working to publicize and solicit support for the International Women's Year.

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*

## 2074th meeting

Monday, 28 October 1974, at 3.10 p.m.

*Chairman:* Mrs. Aminata MARICO (Mali).

A/C.3/SR.2074

### AGENDA ITEM 12

**Report of the Economic and Social Council [chapters III (sections D to F), IV (section J), V (sections A to C, D, paragraphs 436 to 478, 487 to 492 and 494 to 506, and E), VI (sections A.1 to 5 and 7, E and G) and VII (sections 1 to 3)] (*continued*) (A/9603, A/9637, A/9707, A/9733, A/9764, A/9767, A/9785, A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1, 2111/Rev.1, 2113/Rev.1, 2115-2118)**

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that Australia, Dahomey, Greece, Nepal and Yugoslavia had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.2113/Rev.1 and that Nepal had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1.

2. She invited delegations to continue their statements on chapter V, section D, of the report of the Economic and

Social Council (A/9603), on the report of the Commission on the Status of Women.<sup>1</sup> The draft resolutions on improvement of the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1) and assistance and co-operation in accounting for persons missing or dead in armed conflicts (A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1) and the amendments thereto (A/C.3/L.2116) would be taken up later in the meeting.

3. Mrs. ABANKWA (Ghana) said that, although many countries had accepted the principle of equality between men and women proclaimed in the Charter and other relevant instruments and had adopted progressive laws to put that principle into effect, the position of women in society was in practice far from one of equality with men.

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 4.*

The low status currently accorded to women was due partly to discrimination against them by men and partly to deeply rooted attitudes on the part of both sexes towards their respective roles in society. Consequently, although women accounted for more than 50 per cent of the world's population, more women than men were illiterate, under-employed and unemployed; more girls than boys dropped out of school; and very few women graduated from universities to occupy responsible and policy-making positions.

4. The status of women and the opportunities open to them differed from region to region and country to country. In Ghana, women enjoyed equal political rights with men. They could vote and hold public office. In the traditional area, women could be chiefs. They had equal opportunities in education, and there was no discrimination in employment. What was needed was the appropriate qualifications to fill a post. There were women judges, lawyers, doctors, diplomats, university lecturers and scientists, but they were few in number. There were more women teachers and nurses. Women enjoyed equal rights with men in employment. In addition, they were entitled to three months' maternity leave with full pay for three pregnancies. Married women were taxed differently from their husbands and could own property and dispose of it as they wished. There were also women who were self-employed. A few were in manufacturing and transportation businesses, and a great number were traders on a small or a large scale. They controlled a vital sector of the economy, and successive Governments had always sought their co-operation. In the rural areas most of the women were farmers who either had their own small farms or helped their husbands.

5. However, the majority of the women in Ghana were not gainfully employed. Although equal opportunities in education existed for both men and women, the majority of the women were either illiterate or under-educated. That was due to traditional customs, practices and attitudes that discriminated against women. Some parents preferred to encourage boys to obtain higher education because they felt the woman's place was in the home. The result was that some girls grew up with little ambition for higher studies. However, those attitudes were rapidly changing, although a great deal still remained to be done.

6. If women were to be integrated into the Ghanaian economy, the traditional attitudes limiting the roles of women had to be eradicated. Women should be well educated; the illiterate and half-educated should receive vocational training or training in farming and cottage industries, and credit facilities should be made available to them. More day nurseries and health centres, including family planning clinics, should also be opened.

7. Her delegation wished to commend the Commission on the Status of Women for its recommendations regarding action to be taken for raising the status of women to equality with men and for integrating women in development. Economic and Social Council resolution 1856 (LVI) on the status of rural women and resolution 1858 (LVI) on technical co-operation activities for the advancement of women should be of particular interest to developing countries. The granting of technical assistance by the

appropriate United Nations bodies and self-help activities in support of technical assistance projects should lead to progress.

8. The mass media played a vital role in the dissemination of information. Her delegation therefore appreciated the studies which the Commission on the Status of Women was conducting on the operations of the mass media to ensure that deep-rooted attitudes held by women and men about their respective roles were not perpetuated by the mass media.

9. The Programme for the International Women's Year, annexed to Council resolution 1849 (LVI), was unique in the sense that it reflected almost all the concerns or needs of women as a group and indicated action that could be taken during the Year. To achieve the three objectives of the Year—equality between men and women, integration of women in the development effort, and increasing women's contribution to the strengthening of world peace—Governments and United Nations bodies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations should implement the Programme effectively. The mobilization of public opinion in support of the objectives of the International Women's Year was most important also.

10. In Ghana, a national *ad hoc* committee, composed of men and women representing all the interested ministries and women's voluntary organizations, had been set up to plan and organize Ghana's programme for the International Women's Year. It would undertake publicity and educational measures to eradicate traditional attitudes towards the roles of women and to make women aware of the opportunities open to them and encourage them to take advantage of such opportunities.

11. As a co-sponsor of the draft resolution on the International Women's Year (A/C.3/L.2113/Rev.1), she expressed the hope that it would command unanimous support.

12. Dr. MALAFATOPOULOS (World Health Organization) said that WHO was an active supporter of the aims of the International Women's Year. It had expressed its views on the status of women and on the various roles of women, particularly in family formation and reproduction. It believed, first, that the interrelationships between a woman's physical, mental, and social health, their special health needs deriving from their life-cycle and their child-bearing and child-rearing roles required stress; secondly, that those aspects must be viewed together with the role of women in society as participants in production and socio-economic development.

13. Recognizing the renewed emphasis on community participation and the role of the primary health worker in meeting basic health needs, WHO was relying on the contribution women could make to the delivery of health services, particularly in rural areas and in shanty towns, through a simple but efficient health system. During 1975, WHO would stress the Year's central theme in its maternal and child health programme, particularly in relation to the protection of pregnant women, the promotion of breast-feeding, the reduction of child and maternal mortality, and the increasing of social benefits to women through day-care

centres and nurseries. In short, it aimed to uphold the right of women to play a full role in development and to lead a full life to the utmost extent of their potential. In May 1974, the World Health Assembly had adopted a resolution calling upon health authorities to promote breast-feeding and also calling for adequate social measures for mothers working away from their homes during the lactation period.

14. WHO had designated its maternal and child health unit as the focal point for its activities in support of both the Year and the international conference to be held during the Year. It had participated in the United Nations international forum on the role of women in population and development, held earlier in 1974. It had participated in the *ad hoc* interagency meeting convened in July 1974 by the United Nations Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on the International Women's Year, and it would take part in the international women's conference itself. In addition, it would continue its previous co-operation; it would contribute its views to the documents being prepared for the Conference, and it would contribute ideas about some of the items on the Conference's agenda, particularly those concerning current trends and changes in the roles of women and men in family life, and the identification of major obstacles and constraints to the contribution of women as full partners for progress. It would participate in all regional preparatory meetings for the Year and collaborate through the WHO regional offices with the organizers of such meetings. The objectives and the Programme of the Year would be brought to the attention of the WHO Executive Board, and of the World Health Assembly, which were due to meet in January and May 1975 respectively. WHO was also contemplating a proposal, subject to availability of resources, for an interregional meeting in 1975 on the theme of the health aspects of increased participation of women in development. Finally, to herald the opening of the Year, in addition to other public information programmes of the Organization, WHO was devoting a full issue of its magazine *World Health* to women. In 1969 and 1971, the cause of women had been espoused also in cover stories in *World Health*, which he would be happy to make available to interested delegations.

15. Mr. AL-SHAMSÍ (United Arab Emirates) said that, since the United Arab Emirates had achieved independence, increasing attention had been given to improving the lot of all its people, which naturally included women. The Government was doing its best to see that women received all possible care and assistance to guide them towards well-being. Education was therefore important. His country, with its small population, was dependent upon every individual, whether male or female. The Government could not afford to leave women behind, since it was a fact that women could excel in the same way as men.

16. The Government was taking the following measures, which applied to both men and women. All girls and boys were required to enroll in elementary school from their formative years; television programmes brought awareness of education into the homes; secondary school, together with after-school activities, helped to form a solid social background in an atmosphere of co-operation among peers; the enrolment of women of the United Arab Emirates in the universities of other Arab countries was increasing rapidly as more opportunities for education abroad became

available; plans were under way for providing more higher education institutions in the area; for wives and mothers, there were women's clubs and organizations which met regularly to teach new concepts in the fields of medicine, the teaching of reading and writing, and the introduction of modern equipment and methods in housekeeping, domestic tasks and child raising. The United Arab Emirates was carrying on an ambitious programme to wipe out illiteracy and a high-level committee had been set up to conduct adult education. There were 91 male and 23 female adult education centres in the country, with 7,797 male and 2,139 female students. In co-operation with UNESCO, plans had also been made to increase the number of centres for adult female education to 50, so as to cater to at least 3,400 female students.

17. In the short period since the country had attained unity, a substantial number of women had become workers in the professional fields, such as education, social welfare, nursing and related areas. Women were also active in government service, private enterprise, television and radio, journalism and commercial institutions. From 1975 onwards, the women of his country would be capable of filling more and more jobs; they would enjoy equality with men and would contribute to the development and the welfare of both their country and the rest of the world.

18. Mrs. MALLOUM (Chad) said that her delegation hoped that the International Women's Year would contribute substantially to the emancipation of women, thus enabling them to play the important role that was theirs in economic, social and cultural development at the national, regional and international levels. All representatives on the Third Committee should feel deeply involved with the Year, it was their duty to bring women to an understanding of their role. Women should understand that as the equals of men, they should join hands with men in pursuing common constructive goals.

19. It was regrettable that, in the second half of the twentieth century, there were still women who did not enjoy full civil rights, but that was not the case in her country. In Chad, women had equal access with men to all levels of education and to all employment according to their capacities, and they enjoyed full rights. Chad was at the point of no return in its history under the auspices of the National Movement for the Cultural and Social Revolution. The Movement had confirmed the rights that she had mentioned and it was convinced that once they were freed from certain customary fetters impeding their political, economic, social and cultural emancipation, the women of Chad would be able to play a more constructive role than hitherto in building their country. The Movement's manifesto contained a section on the liberation of women in which the Movement pledged itself to give all women the same opportunities for development through the spread of education, particularly literacy campaigns and vocational training. The real barriers to the emancipation of women were illiteracy and ignorance. The women's organization of the Movement was mobilizing all women to carry out the agricultural development programme announced by the President of the Republic of Chad on the first anniversary of the foundation of the Movement.

20. She strongly supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.2113/Rev.1.

21. Mrs. WATANABE (Japan) said that in Japan the Government had completed its initial preparations for participation in the International Women's Year. A survey of the problems and needs of women had been carried out in 1972 and 1973, and the results had been published. It was planned to use that study as the basis of a nation-wide discussion programme for improving the status of women. The Working Woman's Welfare Law had been enacted in 1972 to promote the welfare and improve the status of working women and open up opportunities for equal partnership with men workers.

22. Using the survey and the new law as a starting point, the Government was now planning national programmes to attain the objectives of the Year, as set out in Economic and Social Council resolution 1849 (LVI). They included a conference at the national level, commemorative publications, essay and speech contests, lectures or tours, studies and surveys on the status of women. In addition, the establishment of suitable machinery to deal with questions of competence and with complaints by men and women regarding discriminatory treatment in employment on the basis of sex was now being studied.

23. At the international level, Japan would participate in as many activities of the International Women's Year as possible. It would send a delegation to the international women's conference and, at the Asian regional level, to the ILO/Japan Joint Meeting on Public Service. It had sent a representative to the interregional seminar on national machinery to accelerate the integration of women in development and to eliminate discrimination based on sex held at Ottawa in September 1974. Early in October, the International Women's Year National Standing Conference, composed of representatives of women's organizations, labour unions, employers' organizations and the relevant government ministries, had been established in Japan under the auspices of the Women's and Minors' Bureau of the Ministry of Labour.

24. The member organizations of the National Women's Committee of United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations in Japan were also co-ordinating the activities they would carry out in connexion with the International Women's Year, while the representatives of labour unions would also participate in a conference of affiliated international bodies. The National Women's Association of Agricultural Co-operation had issued a voluminous report on its post-war activities to give wider publicity to the life of rural women and the co-operative movement. The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 2263 (XXII)) had been translated into Japanese and was being widely distributed.

25. Her delegation hoped that the International Women's Year would provide an opportunity to examine thoroughly the use of the word and concept of equality, as used in the expression "equality between men and women". Her delegation did not agree with the view that equality always meant identical treatment for men and women; there should be identical respect for them as human beings, but they were not identical in themselves. She welcomed the fact that UNESCO was planning to carry out a new examination of the very concept of equality. She drew

attention to paragraph 3 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1859 (LVI) on activities of the International Labour Organization to promote the advancement of women and their integration in development. In the draft resolution submitted to the Council by the Commission on the Status of Women,<sup>2</sup> the only convention mentioned had been the Convention concerning Maternity Protection, but the Council had added two others. The reference to the ILO Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value was of particular interest. That was one of the key human rights conventions and the ILO had urged all its member States to ratify it as part of the observation of the International Human Rights Year in 1968. Japan was among the member States which had done so at that time. The Convention established the principle of remuneration without discrimination based on sex, and it had therefore become a bulwark of democratic social order and justice. The fact that that Convention had been included in resolution 1859 (LVI) was highly significant; the Convention concerned a subject which would be at the centre of the discussions of the theme "equality" in the International Women's Year, for the kind of development and peace to be achieved by the Year would depend to a large extent on the concept of equality that would be pursued. There must be a realistic understanding of the fact that conditions varied from country to country and that economic situations and limited natural resources had an impact in the field of human rights, as international technological and scientific developments had on employment and on human life at large. But if, in a year of radical change, the human rights of working women were not secured, the gains from the International Women's Year would be only half-way towards the desired goal.

26. In conclusion, she whole-heartedly supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.2113/Rev.1.

27. Mrs. JONÄNG (Sweden) said that demands for equality and social justice between nations, within nations and between individuals had been recognized in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, which had been adopted by the General Assembly in 1970 in its resolution 2626 (XXV) and which contained the most essential expressions of solidarity with the poor, the neglected and underprivileged groups in the world today. In 1972, by its resolution 3010 (XXVII), the General Assembly had decided to proclaim 1975 International Women's Year; the mid-term review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy would also take place that year. It would be necessary to reformulate the International Development Strategy from the point of view of the status of women and their role in economic and social development and her delegation was of the opinion that the International Women's Year and the forthcoming international conference to be held during the year would make a substantial contribution to the mid-term review and appraisal of the Strategy.

28. The central theme of the International Women's Year was equality, development and peace. The struggle for equality between men and women and for equal rights and

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. I, sect. A, draft resolution XI.

opportunities for women took different forms in different societies. In some countries, women were still fighting for equal legal and political rights, but even in countries where equal rights for men and women had been achieved, the struggle was not yet over because open and direct discrimination had been replaced by more refined forms of discrimination. The preliminary report of the ILO entitled *Women Workers in a Changing World*<sup>3</sup> which had been submitted to the Governing Body of the ILO at its one hundred and ninety-first session showed that there was still a clear division of labour between sexes and a marked tendency everywhere to recruit on the basis of sex rather than on the basis of ability.

29. The Programme for the International Women's Year, annexed to Economic and Social Council resolution 1849 (LVI) provided that women and men had to participate fully and as equal partners in policy formulation and decision-making. Her delegation hoped that, during the International Women's Year, the Members of the United Nations would be able to intensify their efforts towards the achievement of a more egalitarian relationship between men and women and to adopt a universally accepted system of standards in that respect.

30. Whatever the provisions of the United Nations resolutions or national laws might be, however, the structure of economic production, values, standards and prejudices still constituted obstacles which had to be removed in most societies before lasting change could be achieved. A long-term programme for the emancipation of women must therefore be an integral part of a restructuring of contemporary society designed primarily to establish equality between individuals and groups. Such a programme for the political, social and economic liberation of women must also be based on the conviction that all individuals must have not only the same rights and opportunities for education and employment, but also equal responsibilities for the home and children and for political decision-making. A programme of that kind would require a new perception of sex roles in society. Changes in the traditional female sex roles would inevitably bring about changes in the traditional male sex roles. The struggle for the emancipation of women would therefore ultimately lead to the emancipation of men and to a new society based on solidarity and equality.

31. A major share of the activities to take place during the International Women's Year must be focused, at the national and international levels, on the problems of women in developing countries. The situation of most women in developing countries was aggravated by widespread poverty and sometimes by the process of development itself. It must also be borne in mind that the process of political and national liberation in developing countries might provide new possibilities for changing old structures and achieving social liberation, including the emancipation of women. At present, however, the majority of those who, through education, training and employment opportunities, moved into the modernized sector of society were men, while the majority of those remaining in the comparatively unproductive traditional sector were women. Women formed a

majority of the world's untapped or underutilized human resources. Thus, one of the main objectives of the International Women's Year and the forthcoming international conference to be held during the Year, must be to give substance to paragraph 18 (h) of the International Development Strategy, which stated that "the full integration of women in the total development effort should be encouraged".

32. With regard to plans being made in Sweden for activities during the International Women's Year, she said that, in late 1972, her Government had appointed an advisory council on equality between men and women. A consultative group had ensured that women from all walks of life would be represented in the Council, whose task was to improve the understanding of the issue, guide governmental policy on equality between women and men and recommend measures for the implementation of that policy. The Council co-operated with political parties, trade unions, women's organizations and non-governmental organizations in a wide range of research and information activities and was the co-ordinating body for national activities to be carried out during the International Women's Year. A working group had been established under the auspices of the Council to ensure governmental co-ordination and it consisted of representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Authority, the Swedish United Nations Association and the Council.

33. One of the Council's tasks was to survey the plans and activities of governmental and non-governmental organizations during the International Women's Year. To that end, a questionnaire had been sent to a large number of governmental and non-governmental organizations, about 100 of which at the national, regional and local levels had replied that they were planning a wide variety of activities, including folders, exhibitions, reports, courses, seminars and conferences. For example, at the governmental level, an exhibition on the theme of "The right to be a human being" would be opened in connexion with the national inauguration of the International Women's Year. The exhibition would focus on the ways in which the traditional sex roles in society prevented men and women from realizing their full potential as human beings. The Swedish Institute for Social Research was preparing a comprehensive report on the situation of women in contemporary Sweden and the report was intended as a follow-up to the report<sup>4</sup> submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-third session in 1968 on the status of women in Sweden. With regard to activities relating to the situation of women in developing countries, the Swedish International Development Authority had published a book entitled "Women in Development", which was used as part of the educational material for courses and seminars.

34. Her delegation would give full support to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2113/Rev.1, relating to the International Women's Year. With regard to the international conference to be held during the International Women's Year, her delegation considered that the preparations for the Conference and the composition of delegations must reflect the conviction that men must also take part in the work.

<sup>3</sup> G.B. 191/2/1, appendix IV (International Labour Office, Geneva, 1973).

<sup>4</sup> See E/CN.6/531/Add.1.



35. She was pleased to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, draft resolution A/C.3/L.2117, relating to the International Women's Year conference. She drew attention to the third preambular paragraph of that draft resolution and, in that connexion, said that it was of utmost importance that the results of the forthcoming Conference should influence the work of the special session called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 3172 (XXVIII) and that, at its thirtieth session, the General Assembly should consider the proposals and recommendations of the Conference in a separate item. She hoped that, since draft resolution A/C.3/L.2117 was a procedural one, it would be adopted by consensus.

36. Mr. MADI (Jordan) said that his country's Constitution, which stated that Jordanians were equal before the law, provided for equality between the sexes. Women in Jordan had the same rights and duties as men. Elections were based on universal suffrage, thus enabling women to run for any office. They had the same rights as men with regard to employment and received equal pay for equal work. Both sexes had equal opportunities for education at all levels. There were 75.4 female students for every 100 male students. In general, there was nothing in Jordanian legislation to prevent the advancement of women. In fact, all the laws gave women the rights which enabled them to achieve their full potential on an equal footing with men.

37. Referring to family planning in Jordan, which would undoubtedly improve the status of women in society, he said that there were branches of private and public family-planning associations in many Jordanian cities, towns and villages. The Government and some private groups provided information on the advantages of the spacing of children both for the mother and the child and gave expectant mothers advice on health and child care. Particular attention was being paid to the establishment of maternal and child health centres throughout the country. Moreover, the mass media had launched an information campaign to introduce and explain the idea of family planning.

38. Referring to Jordanian plans and activities for the International Women's Year in 1975, he said that a group of Jordanian women had formed a committee for the International Women's Year. Their goal was to encourage the participation of men and women in the activities relating to the Year in order to make it a milestone on the road to complete emancipation and to ensure for coming generations a happy life free from want, misery and war and with full equality and rights for all. The National Assembly of Women in Jordan had published a declaration to inform the public of the International Women's Year and to call for the support and participation of women in the preparations for the Year.

39. His delegation would co-operate fully to ensure the success of the International Women's Year and hoped that draft resolution A/C.3/L.2113/Rev.1 would be adopted by consensus.

40. Mr. EVANS (Australia) said that his delegation considered the status of women to be one of the most important factors in the field of human rights and of profound significance for the future development of man-

kind. Too often in the past, the question of the role and status of women in society had been accorded only token attention. Fortunately, however, it was now being recognized that there was a clear relationship between the improvement of the status of women and the social, economic and political development of society. There was no major issue confronting the world at the present time which could be dealt with effectively unless the role of women was taken into account. Just as the achievement of a new economic order was considered vital for the survival of society, so the achievement of a new order for women was essential if the international community was to resolve global problems and achieve the goals it had set for itself.

41. No two countries confronted the same problems in providing opportunities for women in society and the measures adopted by Governments must be suited to the specific social, economic, historical and cultural context of each society. Referring to the action taken by his own Government to improve the status of Australian women, he said that one of its fundamental objectives was the achievement of full respect for the civil liberties and equal rights of women. In the two years since the present Government had come to power it had endeavoured to effect changes that would ensure the elimination of discrimination and to bring about economic, social and cultural adjustments that would broaden the experience of women and the range of their participation in society for the benefit of all Australians. The Government had worked towards the ratification of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (General Assembly resolution 640 (VII), annex) and the ILO Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value<sup>5</sup> and it had ratified the Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation<sup>6</sup> in June 1973. Committees had been set up to promote the elimination of discrimination against women and provision had been made for the investigation of allegations in that connexion. The committees intended to launch a campaign to direct public attention to discriminatory practices and attitudes.

42. The Government had also taken other practical measures, which included the extension of maternity leave for Government employees to 12 weeks with full pay and a further 40 weeks without pay and without prejudice to continuity of service or status. It had likewise introduced a system of paternity leave to allow fathers to assist in discharging family responsibilities when children were born. It had removed the upper age limit on government appointments so that people of mature age, particularly women, could enter the work force, for example after raising their families. It had also increased opportunities for flexible working hours and part-time employment and had allocated funds for training and retraining schemes for women. The Government realized that an essential aspect of its programme for the improvement of the status of women was the provision of assistance for family planning and improved facilities for child care. Extensive grants had been made available both for research into child care and for the construction and operation of child care centres.

<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organisation, *Conventions and Recommendations, 1919-1966* (Geneva, 1966), Convention No. 100.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Convention No. 111.

43. Speaking at the inaugural meeting of the National Advisory Committee for the International Women's Year in September 1974, the Australian Prime Minister had stated that the programme was particularly ambitious in that it recognized the need to combine health and welfare aspects of child care services, whether provided at home or elsewhere. All children would have access to local centres designed to take care of their education, health, psychological and other needs. The implementation of that programme would place Australia among those countries most genuinely concerned with the welfare of the young.

44. As part of its campaign to achieve more enlightened attitudes towards women, the Government had established a committee to examine the relationship between social change and the education of women and girls and to specify areas of education in which women were at a disadvantage. Recommendations from that committee would be included in a report to be submitted to Parliament in 1975.

45. With regard to women's health, greater participation by women at all levels of health care planning and administration was being promoted and that policy was providing women with increased opportunities to influence the direction taken by health care in the community. For example, the Government had established a women's community health centre in Sydney the aim of which was to meet the need expressed by women for a health service staffed by women and intended to meet the special health needs of women. Aboriginal women were also being involved to an increasing extent in the promotion of health care for their own people.

46. The Government recognized, however, that reforms to enable women to develop more fully their potential as individuals and members of society could not be brought about by purely legislative means. No lasting improvements in society would be achieved until social attitudes could be changed. Often those attitudes were deep-seated, unconscious or unquestioned. Any attack on social inequality must relate to the hidden and usually unspoken assumptions which affected women not only in employment, but in their entire social life. Such reforms required the re-education of the community and it was clear that the Government alone could not be expected to do the whole job. The education of men, women and children was needed to make them aware of the obstacles to the development of women and alert them to the advantages of change. The first step towards such freedom was awareness by women themselves of their inequalities and of the extent of their social, political, economic and cultural deprivation.

47. As a first practical step in educating the community the Government had established a royal commission on human relationships. The Commission's task was to investigate the stresses that society placed on the relationships between people because of such factors as housing, money, children and medical care, and it would present regular interim reports.

48. As part of its efforts to combat the prejudices and attitudes entrenched in its society, Australia placed much emphasis on the importance of the International Women's Year. The Government was in complete accord with the objectives of the Year enunciated by the United Nations

and intended to do its part to make it a year of real significance and substantial achievements in furthering the opportunities of women in society. It was determined to involve Australian women in discussions and decisions about their own future and the future of their country. Men too must participate fully, at both the national and international levels, in examining the status of women and the over-all nature of male-female relationships in society. It was encouraging to note that the designation of 1975 as International Women's Year had aroused great interest in Australia and representations had been made by many bodies urging Government support for the Year in various ways and requesting financial support for projects to mark the Year. The Government had made an initial allocation of \$A 2 million to finance the International Women's Year activities in Australia, and an interdepartmental committee had been established under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister's Special Adviser on Women's Affairs to develop, co-ordinate and publicize the Government's programme. A national advisory committee on the International Women's Year had also been appointed. In addition to that Committee, task forces whose members would be drawn from both Government and non-government sectors might be established to participate in the study of special areas relating, for example, to aboriginal, migrant, elderly and country women. The Government's programme for the Year would embrace research projects, seminars and conferences, the preparation of special publications, and the development of action programmes in various fields. Its focal point would be the organization of a United Nations interregional seminar on the theme of women and the media, which would take place in Sydney towards the end of 1975. The Government was also concerned to examine the role of education, the arts and creative activities aimed at bringing communities closer together. It was hoped that the policies which had been initiated would lead to constructive social readjustments in society and that the plans drawn up for the Year would help women to express more fully their sense of self-respect, dignity and freedom.

49. With respect to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2117, of which his delegation was a sponsor, he said it was essential for the United Nations to do its utmost to eliminate discrimination within its own system if its recommendations on the subject were to be taken seriously. Governments too must participate in that effort and adopt an equitable approach in nominating personnel for the United Nations and other bodies. His delegation recognized that the Secretary-General had taken steps to improve opportunities for recruitment and promotion of women within the United Nations, but a more determined effort must be made if the United Nations was to live up to one of the most important principles of its Charter.

50. Mr. BROAD (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had held consultations with a number of other delegations concerning the draft resolution on the improvement of the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and a revised text had been worked out, which appeared in document A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1. A reference to the debate at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly had been included in the first preambular paragraph, which was followed by a new second preambular paragraph referring to the International Covenants on Human Rights. The operative paragraphs had been slightly

reworded to distinguish between regional intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. He pointed out that in operative paragraph 2 the phrase "the non-governmental organizations" should read "appropriate non-governmental organizations".

51. Miss HARELI (Israel) said that her delegation fully sympathized with the aims of draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1, as her country was well acquainted with the anguish of families whose relatives were missing in action and whose pain would be eased if they knew what had happened to them. No considerations of State could stand in the way of that elementary demand, and her delegation fervently hoped that Governments would respond to it.

52. Mr. BADAWI (Egypt) said that his delegation appreciated the humanitarian considerations underlying draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1 and welcomed the reference in that text to the Geneva Conventions of 1949.<sup>7</sup> The draft resolution should be clearly linked with those Conventions. He therefore proposed that a new preambular paragraph should be inserted between the fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs reading: "*Bearing in mind* the inadmissibility of refusal to apply the Geneva Conventions of 1949". The existing fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs would thus become the sixth and seventh respectively, and in the latter the words "adherence to" should be inserted between "full" and "and effective". Also, the comma at the end of that paragraph should be deleted and the words "by all Member States and in particular those signatories to the Geneva Conventions of 1949" should be added.

53. He further proposed the addition of a new operative paragraph 1 reading: "*Reaffirms* the applicability of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 to all armed conflicts". In operative paragraph 2 the word "*Endorses*" should be changed to "*Appreciates*" and in paragraph 3 the words "or their substitutes" and the words "such as envisaged in the Fourth Geneva Convention" should be deleted.

54. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1 had indicated that they would be prepared to accept his amendments, and had recognized the importance of applying the four Geneva Conventions. His delegation considered that no country should refuse to apply any of those Conventions in order to further its expansionist aims.

55. Mr. PETROV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation fully supported the amendments put forward by the representative of Egypt. He proposed that the words "regardless of their character or location, during hostilities and after the end of hostilities," should be deleted from operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1, since the applicability of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 to all armed conflicts had already been confirmed. In the seventh preambular paragraph the words "who have died" should be replaced by "dead".

56. Mr. HUME (United States of America) said that although his delegation had on the whole endorsed the

changes outlined by the Egyptian delegation in informal consultations, it had not agreed to the text of the amendments read out by the representative of Egypt. It would also have to give further consideration to the amendments submitted by the representative of Bulgaria.

57. Mr. ALLAGANY (Saudi Arabia), referring to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1, proposed that at the end of operative paragraph 2 the semicolon should be changed to a comma and the words "taking into account that such material will not be politically motivated contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations" should be added.

58. Mr. BROAD (United Kingdom) said that he understood the Saudi Arabian representative's difficulties with the present wording of operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution in question. He had no objection to including the wording proposed by Saudi Arabia, which he interpreted as a general provision that non-governmental organizations should act in good faith. For reasons of logic, the order of the second and third preambular paragraphs should be reversed.

59. He expressed the hope that with those changes, the draft resolution could be adopted without a vote.

60. Mr. AL-QAYSI (Iraq), referring to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1, asked the United States representative where the expression "missing in action", used in operative paragraph 1 of that draft, occurred in the Geneva Conventions of 1949. He had searched the text of the four Geneva Conventions without coming across it. Information about missing persons would be covered by the provisions on exchange of information in those instruments. He read out articles 16 and 17 of the First Geneva Convention and drew attention to the parallel provisions in the Second and Third Geneva Conventions, none of which contained the phrase "missing in action". Secondly, the words "regardless of their character or location, during hostilities and after the end of hostilities" also seemed to diverge from those Conventions. Some such wording as "as soon as possible" or "as soon as circumstances permit" was used in the Conventions and it seemed inadvisable to adopt a different wording for the draft resolution. By doing so, the Committee might be inducing the General Assembly to adopt a text which was not in accordance with the Geneva Conventions, a course which would be highly undesirable. The Committee should be chary of using a wording which might create difficulties for Governments because it was not in harmony with that of instruments which they had already ratified.

61. Mr. HSING Sung-yi (China) said that when the United States representative had introduced draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110 at the 2069th meeting, he had mentioned the question of Indo-China. The Chinese delegation felt bound to comment on that reference.

62. If any mention was to be made of the war in Indo-China, it should be stated that it had been the United States violation of the Geneva Agreements of 1954 and its dispatch of troops to South Viet-Nam that had led to the South Viet-Nameese people's war against United States aggression and for their national salvation. Thereafter

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.



United States troops had invaded Cambodia, thus spreading the war to the whole of Indo-China, and had massacred thousands of people in those countries, inflicting huge casualties and losses on the Indo-Chinese people. But the United States representative had made no reference to those facts. The senseless death of American soldiers in the aggressive war in Indo-China was entirely due to the United States Government's policy of aggression. It was now using the pretext of accounting for persons who were missing or dead in armed conflicts to create an issue in the United Nations in the name of humanitarianism, while remaining completely silent on the crimes of the United States Government in its war of aggression in Indo-China. Was that not sheer hypocrisy?

63. As was well known, the question of Viet-Nam had nothing to do with the United Nations. Since the Geneva Conference of 1954, the United Nations had never intervened in the question of Viet-Nam. The Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet-Nam signed by the parties concerned in Paris on 27 January 1973 contained explicit provisions on various questions related to the ending of the war, including the question of the dead and missing, but the United States representative had now raised those questions in the United Nations. Had he not done so with an ulterior motive?

64. More than a year had elapsed since the conclusion of the Paris Agreement but the United States was still interfering in the internal affairs of South Viet-Nam. The Saigon authorities, with the support and assistance of the United States, had refused to implement the Paris Agreement. Peace had not been restored in Viet-Nam. The situation remained tense. The urgent task now before the United States Government was to implement the Paris Agreement and cease its involvement and interference in South Viet-Nam and the whole of Indo-China. That would be in the interests of the Indo-Chinese people and also of the people of the United States and the rest of the world.

65. In view of what he had said, his delegation would not participate in the voting on draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1. At the same time, it wished to state that it fully understood the concern over the matter shown by other sponsors of the draft resolution.

66. Mr. BADAWI (Egypt) asked what the situation was with regard to the amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1 submitted orally by his delegation. It would be necessary for the sponsors of the draft resolution to take a decision on those amendments because their decision would determine the way in which Egypt would vote on the draft resolution.

67. Mr. HUME (United States of America) said that the sponsors could accept the Egyptian amendments, on the original understanding, reached during the informal consultations, that the proposed new operative paragraph 1 would include the words "as stipulated by those Conventions" and that, in the present operative paragraph 3, the words "or any organ presenting satisfactory guarantee of impartiality, such as envisaged in the Fourth Geneva Convention" would be deleted.

68. Mr. GRAEFRATH (German Democratic Republic), referring to the amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/

L.2110 submitted by his delegation in document A/C.3/L.2116, said that he was pleased to note that the sponsors of the draft resolution had taken some of those amendments into account in their revised text. He pointed out, however, that the sponsors had accepted only part of his delegation's proposed amendments to operative paragraph 3; he therefore requested that a vote should be taken on the proposed amendments to that operative paragraph, which corresponded to the amendment proposed by the Egyptian delegation. Also, his delegation had proposed in document A/C.3/L.2116 that the whole sixth preambular paragraph should be deleted. It maintained that proposal and therefore requested that a vote should be taken on it.

69. Mr. BADAWI (Egypt) said that the representative of the United States still had not specified whether the Egyptian amendments concerning the sixth preambular paragraph, the proposed new operative paragraph 1 and operative paragraph 2 were acceptable.

70. Mr. AL-QAYSI (Iraq) pointed out that the representative of the United States had stated that he would accept the new operative paragraph 1 proposed by the representative of Egypt, with the inclusion of the words "as stipulated by those Conventions", but he again wished to ask where that stipulation existed in the Geneva Conventions.

71. Mr. HUME (United States of America) said that he would have no difficulty in accepting the amendments proposed by the representative of Egypt to the preambular paragraphs and to operative paragraph 2. Referring to the question asked by the representative of Iraq, he said that the words "as stipulated by those Conventions" would reaffirm the applicability of the Geneva Conventions. Moreover, the inclusion of those words in the new operative paragraph 1 would make it clear that reference was being made to the Geneva Conventions in the new operative paragraph 2.

72. Mr. EVANS (Australia) said that he was not sure whether the suggestions by the representative of Bulgaria had been made as a formal proposal. Similarly, he was uncertain about the amendments in document A/C.3/L.2116, particularly if a vote was to be taken on two of them, as requested by the representative of the German Democratic Republic. He pointed out that the issues involved in some of the amendments submitted would cause difficulties for many delegations.

73. Mr. PETROV (Bulgaria) said that he had formally submitted amendments to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1, but he was not sure whether they had been accepted by the representative of the United States.

74. Miss CABALLERO (Mexico), speaking on a point of order, said that many delegations were probably in the same situation as her own and very confused about the status of the oral amendments proposed by several delegations. Without a final text incorporating those amendments, her delegation would not be able to vote on draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1.

75. Mr. AL-QAYSI (Iraq) said that he again wished to ask the representative of the United States where provisions existed in the Geneva Conventions concerning persons

missing in action. He understood the meaning of the words “as stipulated in those Conventions” which the representative of the United States wished to be included in the proposed new operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, but the representative of the United States first had to prove that the concept of persons missing in action was actually mentioned in the Geneva Conventions.

76. Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco) proposed that a vote should be taken on draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1 since there was so much confusion with regard to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1. She appealed to the delegation of the United States and other delegations concerned to hold consultations on the amendments to the latter text submitted orally at the current meeting.

77. Mr. VELA (Guatemala) supported the appeal made by the representative of Morocco.

78. Mr. RAZA (Pakistan) said that he also supported the appeal by the representative of Morocco and her proposal that the Committee should proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1.

79. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1, the words “on Human Rights” should be inserted after the words “the International Covenants”.

80. Mr. BROAD (United Kingdom) said that that amendment was acceptable to his delegation.

81. The CHAIRMAN said that if she heard no objection she would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1 as orally amended.<sup>8</sup>

*Draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1, as amended, was adopted without objection.*

82. Mrs. DE BARISH (Costa Rica) said that her delegation had joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1 because it considered that the draft resolution was a very constructive contribution to the subject to be discussed at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly. Her delegation agreed with the need for appropriate documentation and information, and was pleased that the report would not entail additional expenditure. It welcomed the reference to the International Covenants on Human Rights, which would enter into force in the near future, and hoped that the Optional Protocol to the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights would also be implemented. The report should include proposals relating to the International Covenants on Human Rights and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Her delegation considered that any delegation was entitled to raise the question of the “creation of the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights”, as no vote had been taken on the matter. No serious study of human rights and fundamental freedoms could ignore that point. The question had been before the General Assembly since 1965 and many delegations had shown interest in the idea.

83. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had not objected to draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1 because it understood the draft resolution to be an alternative approach to creating the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

84. His delegation attached particular importance to the second preambular paragraph, as it had stated on several occasions that the International Covenants on Human Rights should be implemented as soon as possible. In preparing his report, the Secretary-General should state his views on how the entry into force of the International Covenants would affect the activity of all the organs concerned with human rights. The report should be based primarily on the views of Member States.

85. Mr. STÅHL (Sweden) said that although his delegation had supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1, it stressed the fact that the item entitled “Creation of the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights” had never been put to the vote, and it hoped that the question would be discussed during the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

86. The CHAIRMAN noted that the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/L.2110/Rev.1 had been postponed several times, and therefore requested the representatives concerned to present their amendments to that draft resolution in writing by the next morning.

87. Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco) suggested that the delegations of Bulgaria, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic and Iraq should be requested to hold consultations after the meeting in order to decide on their amendments. Any amendments they did not agree on could then be sent to the Secretariat in writing. She therefore moved that the meeting should be adjourned.

*The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved by 66 votes in favour, 3 against, and 13 abstentions.*

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*

<sup>8</sup> The amendments appeared in document A/C.3/L.2111/Rev.1/Corr.1, dated 29 October.