UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
39th meeting
held on
Monday, 12 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SOMAVIA (Chile)

CONTENTS

AQENDA ITEM 1021 FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO THE YEAR 2000 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 89: EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF BODIES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SUCH INSTRUMENTS (continued)

AOENDA ITEM 93: HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOQICAL DEVELOPMENTS (continued)

AQENDA ITEM 97: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 105: INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)

AOENDA ITEM 106: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE (continued)

AQENDA ITEM 109: TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT(~)

AGENDA ITEM 1101 ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE ELECTIONS (continued)

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/45/SR.39
29 November 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

90-57066 3210S (E)

/...

14 P.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 102t FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO THE YEAR 2000 (continued) (A/C.3/45/L.19/Rev.2)

AGENDA ITEM 89: EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS INSTRUMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF BODIES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SUCH INSTRUMENTS (continued) (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. A, A/45/205, 207, 216, 222, 227, 230, 264-267, 269, 270, 272, 280, 636, 668, annex, and 707)

AGENDA ITEM 93: HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS (continued) (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. A and A/45/580)

AGENDA ITEM 97: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (continued) (A/45/202, 222, 265, 269 and 473)

AGENDA ITEM 105: INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (A/45/3, chap. V, sect. A, A/45/40, 174, 178, 403, 597, 598 and 657; E/1990/23)

AGENDA ITEM 106: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE (continued) (A/45/205, 222, 225, 265 and 270)

AGENDA ITEM 1091 TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT (continued) (A/45/44 and Corr.1, 189, 205, 207, 216, 225, 227, 230, 254, 264, 266, 280, 405, 615 and 633)

AGENDA ITEM 110: ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF PERIODIC AND GENUINE ELECTIONS (continued) (A/45/202, 203, 205, 207, 225, 227, 230, 254, 264-267, 269, 270, 272, 280 and 626)

Draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.19/Rev.2 (agenda item 102)

1. Ms. McLENNAN (United States of America), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/45/L.19/Rev.2, said that Papua New Guinea and Mongolia had joined the list of sponsors. After many consultations with various groups, the sponsors had accepted the changes contained in the revised draft. She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus,

2. Mr. BANGUI-DUCAGS (Central African Republic) said that the international community's agreement on respect for human rights should be commended, since more than 70 per cent of the Member States had ratified or acceded to the International Covenants on Human Rights.

3. The Central African Republic was pleased to have acceded to the various international human-rights instruments, in particular the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights. The international community had considered the trial of the former Central African Emperor - the second trial of a former head of State to be held in the twentieth century - exemplary from the point of view of respect for

/...

(Mr. Bangui-Ducass, Central African Republic)

human rights; the Central African Republic had thereby demonstrated its determination to be included among the States which respected human rignts and freedoms.

4. He drew attention to some of the adverse consequences of scientific and technological developments for the spiritual side of man, and said that the United Nations should have at its disposal a body which would enable it to exercise its moral authority effectively. Consideration should therefore be given to the establishment of an ethics committee under the authority of the Secretary-General, which would make the international community and public opinion aware of the moral consequences of scientific, technical, economic, social and cultural activities. Such a committee, which would be neither a legal nor a political institution, could be composed of persons whose moral reputation or unquestionable competence in humanitarian issues had been universally recognised.

5. Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) commended the wide-ranging codification of human rights since 1366, which included the adoption of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and more than 20 other international instruments on the subject. However, the proliferation of international instruments could cause problems.

6. There was the risk that a sufficient number of States might not become parties to an instrument, which would preclude its universality. That had been the case with the International Covenants on Human Rights, to which only 90 countries had acceded to date. If new standards were to be accepted and enforced, due account must be taken of the significant differences in the legal, social and economic situations of different countries and regions of the world.

7. It sometimes happened that new agreements contradicted each other or overlapped with other existing agreements, From the standpoint of universality, it was appropriate to bear in mind General Assembly resolution 41/120 of 4 December 1986.

8. There was also the problem of reservations, which were inconsistent with the main purpose of the standards set forth in the agreements.

9. The reporting obligations of States parties would become increasingly complicated and there could be delays in their submission and consideration.

10. It would therefore be advisable to standardiae the content requirements for national reports, avoid duplication, lengthen the intervals between reports, and alleviate the burden which such reports imposed on States parties, for example by computerizing the reporting system.

11. With regard to the submission of reports, the role of the advisory services was crucial, particularly in the training of officials working in the human-rights field. Those services should feature prominently in United Nations public information programmes in order to ensure that interested States became familiar

/...

(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

with, and used, them. It would be helpful to establish guidelines for the functioning of such services.

12. He emphasised the importance of the Voluntary Fund for Advisory Services and Technical Assistance in the Field of Human Rights, and said that his Government had contributed $US 50,000 to the *Fund* in both 1989 and 1990.

13, Informal meetings, such as the one hold in December 1989 between the Centre for Human Rights and donor countries, were also important for improving the advisory services.

14. The problem of financing the treaty bodies must be solved. Such financing should *come* from the States parties. While there had been some instances of funding from the regular budget of the United Nations, they should not be regarded as a precedent. That would only increase the Organisation's current serious financial constraints, just when the United Nations was stepping up its activities to promote and protect human rights and to find solutions to a range of social problems including drugs, the status *of* women, crime prevention, youth, the aging, and the disabled.

15. With regard *to* the question of religious intolerance, he noted that discrimination in that area constituted not only a serious violation of human rights, but could also affect peace and security at the national and international levels. His Government therefore attached great importance to the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, adopted by the General Assembly *in* 1981.

16, The question of codifying the Declaration was complex and delicate, requiring careful study and the involvement of non-governmental and grass-roots organisations. In his delegation's view, the United Nations should focus its attention on ways tc ensure the effective implementation of the Declaration.

17. It was to be hoped that the new concept of the child embodied in the Convention on the Rights of the Child would be properly understood and given favourable consideration, since the Convention viewed *the* child as an individual with specific rights and freedoms, and not as the mere recipient of care and protection from its parents and society.

18. Japan supported the idea of convening a world conference on human rights in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 44/156, of 15 December 1989, and stressed the crucial role of the Centre *for* Human Rights, since the international community depended upon it to ensure that genuine respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms was achieved throughout the world.

19. Ms. PRINCE AGBODJAN (Togo) said, with reference to agenda item 97 "Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child", that the situation of children in the world constituted one of the most serious and pressing problems of the modern age. Praising UNICEF's persistent and valuable efforts to promote

/...

(Ms. Prince Agbodjan, Togo)

the growth and development of all the world's children, she also highlighted the activities of various organisations of the United Nations system, in particular the World Health Organisation, and of non-governmental organisations, aims4 t improving the situation of children.

20. She recommended that the Convention on the Rights of the Child should be as widely disseminated as possible, since few even knew that it existed. The Convention could only help to enhance the status of children if its provisions were given practical implementation by Governments. The signing of the Convention by a large number of countries was convincing proof of the importance attached to it by the international community.

21. Urgent measures should be adopted to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention, specifically by organising information and awareness campaigns at the international, regional and national levels, by accelerating the ratification procedures in order to give the Convention a truly universal character, by taking prompt measures to bring national legislations into line with its provisions and by setting in motion the mechanism to monitor its implementation.

22. It was essential to co-ordinate those measures at all levels in order to achieve the objectives set for children and development and to strengthen international co-operation with the developing countries, particularly the least developed and most indebted among them. Moreover, in order to improve the situation of children, it was also imperative to improve the juridical and social status of women.

23. Togo was among the first 20 signatories to the Convention and was convinced that no sacrifice was too great when dealing with the problems of young people and children. Her Government was therefore implementing policies in full harmony with the Convention's provisions.

24. Her delegation welcomed the results of the World Summit for Children and fully supported the objectives of the Plan of Action for child survival, protection and development. It was gratified to note that its primary objective was to relieve the sufferings of children.

25. Mr. WARADI (Fiji), speaking on agenda item 106 "Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance", remarked on certain aspects of the evangelical work carried out in Fiji and other Pacific islands during the colonial period and on the social evolution from tribal warfare and cannibalism to polytheism and monotheism achieved in the course of a mere half century. Fiji's heterogeneous society had made religious pluralism possible.

26. Fiji endeavoured to ensure that its legislation and official administrative processes reflected sensitivity, understanding and tolerance of beliefs and religious diversity. The régime of equality and tolerance established by its Constitution fostered peaceful and harmonious coexistence in a multi-religious and multiracial society. Fiji had enlisted the assistance of religious and charitable

/...

(Mr. Waradi, Fiji)

bodies and of other non-governmental organizations in addressing the problem of religious intolerance and promoting popular awareness to encourage the practical implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, adopted in 1981, and of its protocols.

27. He commended the work of the Special Rapporteur, who had kept the Comittee informed about incidents and governmental measures which were inconsistent with the Declaration. His delegation also strongly supported the consideration by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of an international convention on the elimination of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief.

28. He also expressed his concern regarding the perpetuation of practices of religious intolerance in certain parts of the world mentioned in the Special Rapporteur's report, and shared the international community's dismay at the discrimination and persecution to which religious minorities and atheists were subjected.

29. Mrs. RASOANAIVO (Madagascar), emphasizing certain aspects of the distressing situation of children in many countries, emphasized that meeting the needs of the child should be taken as the starting point for the future development of the human race. Measures adopted in recent years, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, had provided evidence of the growing widespread awareness of that problem. The accession of many States to the Convention demonstrated the keen interest aroused by the current situation and their desire to change the status quo.

30. The effective implementation of the Convention and the commitment by all States parties to adopt active and positive approaches to the problems would help improve the situation of children. Her Government's policies were based on a philosophy consistent with the country's real possibilities. The State played a co-ordinating, regulating and catalysing role and co-operated closely with non-governmental organizations, rural and urban communities and religious groups in developing, formulating and implementing policies for the survival, development and protection of the child.

31. Her Government had set as its target to immunise 75 per cent of its children before the end of the century and fostered the active involvement of communities in primary health care, with the aim of creating a healthy environment, primarily through pure drinking water supply and sanitation programmes and projects.

32. The nutrition strategy of the Government of Madagascar was based on programmes to support information on nutrition, the creation of school canteens and the teaching in schools of the basic facts about production of essential foods. Although the literacy rate was currently 80 per cent, one factor that had had an adverse effect on the literacy programme was the drop-out rate in schools, for many children left school in order to work, so as to help their families make ends meet. In order to rectify that situation, a programme was being implemented as a

/...

(Mrs. Rasoanaivo, Madagascar)

follow-up to the literacy programme, and steps were being taken to raise family incomes and improve living standards.

33. The Government was giving priority to pre-school child care and had set up assistance centres for teenagers. It was also dealing with the protection of children in difficult situations, especially homeless children. There were non-profit organizations that dealt with disabled children. There was no doubt that the Convention on the Rights of the Child would give new impetus to national activities and international co-operation to benefit children.

34. Ms. BARGHOUTI (Observer for Palestine) said that since the start of the Israeli occupation in 1967, the Palestinian people had been living in conditions of the utmost hardship. Israel was blatantly flouting the rights of the Palestinians and was implementing a policy of genocide. It was beating, detaining, torturing and murdering Palestinians, as well as splitting up their families and destroying their homes. The result was hundreds of dead and thousands of wounded among those waging a just and legitimate fight against the occupation. The most recent massacre had occurred on 8 October 1990, in Jerusalem.

35. Israel's savagery had intensified during the first two years of the intifadah. As of today, Israel had murdered approximately 2,000 people and wounded more than 5,000. Scores of women had suffered miscarriages, many thousands of Palestinians had been crippled, more than 10,000 homes and business premises had been totally or partially demolished, hundreds of cars had been burned, and thousands of trees uprooted. Those figures were based on reports by Amnesty International, the Commission on Human Rights and various non-governmental organisations, some of them Israeli, dealing with the protection of children and human rights. All those reports revealed the sufferings inflicted on the Palestinian people by the tyrannical policy of Israel, which had been roundly condemned by the international community.

36. Children made up 50 per cent of the Palestinian population. The majority of them had undergone physical torture and detentionr and the Israeli army, police and settlers had driven them from their homes. According to one Swedish non-governmental organisation, hundreds of women had been tortured and their sufferings had had serious psychological consequences for their children. Many children required treatment for injuries resulting from poison gas and bullets. The average age of the children who had been murdered was less than 10 years. Many of them had been murdered in their homes, evidence that they had not been out on the streets, protesting with the demonstrators. According to one Israeli non-governmental organization, children in the detention centres had been beaten in an attempt to extract false confessions from them. Children under interrogation were also threatened with the demolition of their homes or the expulsion of their relatives.

37. With the exception of the children of South Africa, whose circumstances were different, no children in the world suffered more than those of Palestine. While the World Summit for Children was being held at the United Nations on 30 September

(Ms. Barghouti, Observer, Palestine)

and 1 October 1990, many Palestinian children had taken refuge in the offices of the Red Cross in Gaza and had sent a message to the world leaders meeting in New York, requesting their assistance. In that message, the Palestinian children had declared that they were living under the Zionist yoke and at the mercy of Israel's terrorist practices. They had also declared that their rights had been violated, that they had been tortured and deported, and their homes destroyed. Palestinian children had been unrepresented at the World Summit in New York, clear proof that they were being ignored.

38. Palestine called upon the international community to apply the Convention on the Rights of the Child to all the world's children, particularly Palestinian children, who were fighting for freedom with the most rudimentary weapons: with s tones. The Convention must now enter into force.

39. In conclusion, she said that the time had come for the international community to reaffirm its will to oppose the Israeli occupation, since peace was a sine qua non for respect of the dignity of the child, and of human beings in general.

40. Mr. KASOULIDES (Cyprus) said that observance of human right& was one of the fundamental objectives of the United Nations and its organs, since it was related to the maintenance of international peace and security. Standard-setting activities on human rights were one of the Organisation's most formidable accomplishments.

41. Cyprus attached great importance to the human dimension of the functions of the United Nations, as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant oa Civil and Politic 1 Rights and its Optional Protocols, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and all other relevant. instruments. Cyprus noted with satisfaction the number of ratifications or accessions to the International Covenants and to tire Convention.

42. However, implementation of those international human-rights instruments was the stumbling block. At a time of sweeping developments all over the world, in which the United Nations was taking on a more dynamic role, attention should be focused on securing universal adherence *to,* and to monitoring compliance with the existing *instruments.*

43. Cyprus had studied with interest the conclusions of the study by the independent expert on possible long-term approaches aimed at enhancing the effective application of existing and prospective treaty bodies, and the conclusions of the third meeting of persons chairing the human-rights treaty bodies. Those reports had highlighted the problems that the growth of the treaty system had brought with it, problems that had not been foreseen when the human-rights instruments were drafted. The reports underlined the need for normative consistency; for adequate State and secretariat resources to service the treaty bodies; and for cross-referencing in the reporting procedures. It was to be hoped that all States would co-operate in meeting those needs.

/...

(Mr. Kasoulides, Cyprus)

44. Cyprus commended the work of the task force on computerisation on the establishment of a data base to store and process information on the reporting systern. Cyprus had ratified or had acceded to the main international human-rights instruments, and the international machinery established for that purpose was free to monitor the work of the courts and, more generally, the country's human-rights record. Nevertheless, in part of Cyprus, proteatioa of human rights was outside the control of the Government, since that part of its territory waa occupied by another State.

45. The Human Rights Committee had made significant progress in the implementation of human-rights standards, through dialogue and consensus, benefiting from the recent events on the world stage.

46. Cyprus welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was the result of laborious and prolonged negotiations, and which was a remarkable achievement in which the specific need for protection and care of children through a legally binding instrument was fully recognised. It was gratifying to note that a large number of States had signed the Convention, a fact which must be interpreted as a sign of the effort8 to improve the welfare of children and safeguard their fundamental rights.

47. On the subject of the Second Optional Protcaol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, he said that in Cyprus the death penalty - which in any case had not been carried out for the previous 27 years - had been abolished except for certain military offences.

46. With regard to the elimination of all form of religious intolerance, Cyprus, like many other countries, had a heterogeneous society. The principle of religious freedom, proclaimed most particularly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, had always been one of the salient characteristics of his country's society. For generations the Greek Cypriots, who represented approximately 80 per cent of the population and belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, had intermingled in the same towns and villages, on a basis of friendship, mutual respect and religious tolerance, with the Muslim Turkish Cypriots, who comprised approximately 18 per cent of the population.

49. The Constitution of Cyprus guaranteed freedom of religious worship and the equality of all religions before the law, prohibited all discrimination against any religious institution and recognised the right of individuals to practise their religion in public or private, individually or collectively,

50. Unfortunately, the exercise of those rights had been severely restricted in the occupied part of Cyprus as a result of foreign aggression and occupation. His delegation firmly believed that without external interference, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities would manage to coexist peacefully and harmoniously , as they had for centuries.

51. He agreed with those who believed that the current international situation provided a unique opportunity to implement international human-rights instruments

/...

(Mr. Kasoulides, Cyprus)

establishing enforcement mechanisms and procedurea. Respect for *human* rights and fundamental freedoms war a prerequisite for the existence of a more humane international society.

52. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New guinea) said that the aspirations of all peoples were refleoted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which the general Assembly had adopted unanimously in 1989 and whioh the Government of Papua New Guinea had signed on 31 August 1990. The success of the World Summit for Children and the signing of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by more than 100 States represented a milestone in human history.

53. Although they comprised a culturally diversified society, the people of Papua New Guinea shared a common philosophy of life based on the traditional extended family. That family structure gave every individual the necessary security to feel safe in society at large,

54. In accordance with the growing international consensus on giving *greater* attention to the human dimension of development in the 1990s, Papua New Guinea endorsed the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s, as well as the Plan of Action for its implementation. The country had already incorporated into its overall national development strategies many of the objectives and activities provided for in the Convention *on* the Rights of the Child,

55. The country's educational programmes *took* full account of the need *for* the total development of the ahild as an individual. The educational system was based on the principle of integrated human development, The full development and integration of children was necessary to liberate them from under-development and exploitation.

56. The Prime Minister of Papua New guinea had held consultations recently with the Chairman of the South Pacific Forum and other leaders of the region on the need for a regional programme for the growth, development and protection of the child, in aoaordance with the Convention and the World Declaration. The Prime Minister had also consulted with UNICEF during the World Summit for Children on the need to convene a regional conference in the South Pacific for the purpose of properly informing Pacific Island governments of the Convention and its implementation. His delegation requested the United Nations and its specialised agencies to promote national and regional programmes to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

57. Since the institution of the family was vital to the total development of the child and since environment and development should not be isolated from programmes for children, the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil in 1992, must *take* full account of both the Convention and the Declaration.

58. Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) raid that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant8 on Human Rights

/...

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

constituted a solid basis for international co-operatic ı in that field. However, it was necessary for all States to implement systematically the principle of the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights, since that was the only way to broaden the scope of civil and politiaal rights. The issue of human rights had recently been the focus of discussions throughout the world because of new threats to the development of the human personality and also because of the need to review areas of co-operation and to examine social and political trends without ideological or other distinctions.

59. He expressed satisfaction with the constructive spirit demonstrated in the deliberations of the forty-eixth session of the Commission on Human Rights and with the productive work of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The third periodic report which the Ukrainian SSR had submitted on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights bore witness to the significant progress achieved in that country in terms of new human-rights legislation and other measures. The observations of qualified international experts would undoubtedly help to promote the adoption of national legal measures.

60. His country also intended to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights and had already requested permission from the French Minister for Foreign Affairs to participate in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, to be hosted by France during the forthcoming Summit in Paris, In September, a European seminar on international human-rights standards had been held in Kiev, in which scientists, diplomats and experts from governmental and non-governmental organiaetions had participated in discussions on topics relating to the legal protection of human rights.

61. On 16 July 1990 the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR had adopted a Declaration on the State Sovereignty of the Ukraine, which recognised the supremacy of the rules of international law over national legislation. The Ukrainian Government had adopted measures to codify and strengthen human rights and to supervise the legal procedures designed to implement them, which had achieved notable success in regard to vulnerable groups such as children and migrant workers.

62. Ample coverage had still, however, not been received by some topics, including that of ethnic and religious minorities. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was willing to co-operate fully in the work of the Human Rights Commission in that regard and had included the question in bilateral declarations, such as that prepared in conjunction with Poland (A/45/657). The joint statement formulated with Hungary (A/45/597) also contained a clear exposition of the concern felt by both parties in respect of human rights and the individual and collective rights of national minorities, and it had also been agreed to embark on the preparation of a draft European Charter of the Rights of Minorities because it was believed that the adoption of such a document would be an important contribution to the establishment of a common European home.

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

63. The question of human rights and scientific and technological developments had been considered in the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and other forums. In that respect, attention should be drawn to the important decision referred to in resolution 1990/41 of the Commission of Human Rights with regard to a study *on* the problems of the environment and its relation to human rights,

64. With regard to agenda item 106, he said that the Ukrainian SSR had begun to formulate legal provisions aimed at guaranteeing freedom of thought, religion *and* belief. By virtue of the recently adopted law on freedom of thought and religion, recognition was given to the right to disseminate religious ideas, receive religious teaching collectively or at home and establish oontaot with other religious organizations abroad and exchange information with them. The Ukrainian SSR was creating conditions in which all religious groups aould conduct their activities without discrimination and all citizens oould profess the faith of their choice.

65. Mr. MONTALVO (Ecuador), referring to agenda item 89, said that although human rights had been an inherent feature of every human being before *they* had been enshrined in international instruments, Ecuador attaahed due importanae to the international conventions and agreements on human rights.

66. As for the effective operation of the human-rights treaty bodies, he noted that the report of the persons chairing them (A/45/636) contained a number of very practical and valid proposals regarding the supervision of the treaties, the co-ordination of the treaty bodies, the aonduat of their work and the dissemination of the country reports, the publicity given to them and, in particular, the manner in which they were presented. In spite *of* its cost, the computerisation project would be of the utmost usefulness to the Centre in its work. Due attention needed to be paid to the financing needs of the various committees. In that respect, he noted the valuable contribution made by the voluntary funds, which should be strengthened.

67. The planned world conference on human rights would provide a unique opportunity to reaffirm the fact that human rights remained a major issue. Ecuador, which was a signatory to the main international human-rights instruments, had already subscribed to the Convention against Torture and would subscribe to the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, relating to the abolition of the death penalty.

68. As for agenda item 93, he said that although scientific and technological progress should be shared by all mankind in order to promote *and* encourage universal respect for human rights, the excessively materialistic nature of the world order had given rise to economic inequality, which had *meant* that rather than contributing to peace, scientific and technological progress had become a source of tension, which the international community should eliminate.

69. With regard to religious intolerance, he said that since the Constitution of Ecuador guaranteed freedom of religion, Ecuadorian society was characterized by broad religious pluralism.

/...

(Mr. Montalvo, Ecuador)

70. Ecuador had been the first Latin American country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the first country in the world to embark on its implementation. It had formulated a programme, which UNICEF had taken as a world model, to organise a plebiscite, directed and co-ordinated by children, so that all Ecuadorian children could vote to select the rights they felt had the most impact on their lives, The Government was, in addition, actively engaged in the implementation of the provisions of the Convention, Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the recent World Summit for Children.

71, With regard to agenda item 110 and a draft resolution submitted under it, he said Ecuador felt that the electoral process of any State lay within the sovereign and exclusive purview of thsf State. Any electoral act was an internal and intrinsically political affair, affecting the very lives of the people of the country concerned. That being the case, elections could not be made subject to interference by outside faators as that would change their very nature, Although exceptionally there might be cases in which it might be advisable to seek United Nations assistance, such assistance should be rendered only at the request of the State concerned. Otherwise, intervention in that form could have negative political consequences for the United Nations itself.

73. The_, referring to the question posed by the representatives of Greece and the Netherlands at the 36th meeting of the Committee with regard to a document relating to agenda item 59, said that the Secretariat had reported that that document was being prepared and would be distributed as soon as possible.

73. Ms. VASSILIOU (Greece), noting that no definite reply had been given as to the date on whioh the document would be distributed, said that it referred to solutions to the difficulties facing the Centre for Human Rights and would be used as a background paper for the preparation of a draft resolution, of which Greece was the principal sponsor. She asked whether the Secretariat could speed up its work so that the report could be distributed to members of Committee on Friday, 16 November, at the latest. Otherwise, the Committee would not be able to study it as required under Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/47.

74. Ms. KODIKARA (Philippines) joined the delegation of Greece and other delegations in requesting that the report on the Centre on Human Rights should be distributed by the beginning of the following week at the latest. The Third Committee needed the report to complete its consideration of the sixth cluster of agenda items and to adopt the necessary measures.

75. Mr. DUHS (Sweden) endorsed the views expressed by the representatives of Greece and the Philippines concerning the importance of distributing the report. During the debate on the medium-term plan, the Nordic countries had stressed the need for more resources for the Centre for Human Rights. If the Third Committee was to give due consideration to that question and prepare a resolution on it, it would need the report.

/...

76. Mr. BRETHES (France) endorsed the views expressed by the representatives of Greece, the Philippines and Sweden and stressed the importance which his delegation attached to the speedy distribution of the report so that the Third Committee could perform the task entrusted to it.

77. Mrs. (Nigeria), speaking in support of the interventions made by the representatives of Greece and the Philippines, noted that in speaking on the first cluster of agenda items, her delegation had asked that more resources should be allocated to the Centre for Human Rights, The report on the Centre was essential to the work of the Third Committee and should be submitted as soon a8 possible.

78. Mr. KHODAKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he shared the concerns voiced by the delegations which had taken the floor before him; he too hoped that the Secretariat would do everything in its power to submit the report in time for it to be considered and for the necessary decisions to be made with regard to the Centre.

79. Mr. BARKER (Auetralia) said that in its statement on agenda item 89, his delegation had referred in great detail to the question of resources for human-rights activities. The report was required in order to examine that question more carefully, and for that reason he associated himself with those representatives which had asked that the document should be distributed in the course of the present week.

80. Mr. CRUZ (Chile) said he too wished to join those representatives who had taken the floor before him to draw attention to the Third Committee's need to be seized of the report on the Centre on Human Rights in time,

81. The CHAIRMAN said he hoped the Secretariat would take the necessary steps to see that the document in question was distributed by the end of the week (16 November) at the latest.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.