



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Forty-second Session
OFFICIAL RECORDS

Wednesday, 10 May 1967,
at 10.50 a.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Milan KLUSÁK
(Czechoslovakia).

Present:

Representatives of the following States, members of the Council: Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, France, Gabon, Guatemala, India, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela.

Observers for the following Member States: Austria, China, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Yugoslavia.


The observer for the following non-member State: Federal Republic of Germany.

Representatives of the following specialized agencies: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization; International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; World Meteorological Organization.

Organization of work (E/L.1152/Amend.1)

1. The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to the revised time-table of the organization of work of its forty-second session (E/L.1152/Amend.1), which reflected the comments made by representatives at the previous meeting.

2. Mr. VIAUD (France) and Mr. SCHUURMANS (Belgium) supported the proposed programme of work but expressed the hope that the discussion on the report of the Commission on Human Rights (item 11) could begin in the middle of the second week.

3. The  PRESIDENT said that he would bring those comments to the attention of the Chairman of the Social Committee.

The programme of work was adopted.

Report of the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on applications for hearings (E/4360)

4. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the recommendations made by the Council Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in its report (E/4360) on applications by non-governmental organizations in Category A consultative status for hearings on certain agenda items.

The recommendations were adopted.

Statement by the representative of Belgium

5. Mr. SCHUURMANS (Belgium) said that, in returning, after an absence of twelve years, to the Council, which had been enlarged by the admission to membership of many countries from a continent formerly represented only symbolically, his delegation wished to stress that political independence would be a snare and a delusion if the highly industrialized countries continued to dominate the economies of the newly independent States. Yet economic independence would be an unattainable goal for those States if they were left exclusively to their own meagre resources. That was why it was incumbent on the more favoured countries to provide the assistance which alone could save the young nations from sliding into chaos, destitution and despair. While international public opinion and Governments recognized the close link between the problems of development and peace, mutual assistance could not be considered merely a kind of insurance premium which the rich countries were willing to pay in order to prevent disorder. That would be to distort its meaning; assistance to the less developed countries should be as free of economic as of political ulterior motives. At the same time, the beneficiaries should be duly appreciative of the efforts made on their behalf and should guarantee judicious use of the resources placed at their disposal.

6. His Government, prompted by a deep sense of human solidarity, was one of the few Governments contributing at least 1 per cent of its national income to the assistance of the developing countries. While, for obvious historical reasons, most of its bilateral assistance had been directed to the African regions for which it had, until recently, been responsible, it realized the need to expand that assistance to countries in other parts of the world.

7. In view of the increasing importance given to the problems of development and co-operation, he wondered whether the Council's responsibility for co-ordination, which it had under the Charter of the United Nations, should not be exercised in harmonizing the activities of the numerous United Nations organs concerned with assistance to the developing countries and, as far as possible, of the specialized agencies as well. If so, the Council should not only define the respective

spheres of competence of those bodies so as to eliminate jurisdictional disputes and duplication, but should also lay the groundwork for true and lasting co-operation between the various secretariats by formulating a concerted and coherent policy. It should also establish close contacts with Governments with a view to harmonizing multilateral and bilateral assistance programmes as far as possible.

8. Now that the Economic and Social Council had become more representative and was seeking to improve its working methods and expand its sphere of action, every Government should look to it for the co-ordination of co-operation for development. Without infringing the autonomy of the other organs and agencies, a strengthening of the Council's guiding role could hardly fail to make the collective action of the United Nations family of organizations more effective.

9. Co-ordination was becoming increasingly essential as institutions and initiatives of all kinds proliferated, for their effectiveness could be guaranteed only by a

supreme, vigilant and enlightened guide. The Council was more qualified than any other organ to act as such a guide and to ensure that objectives were pursued consistently and that the available means were used rationally and fairly. Moreover, the Council was probably the organ which was in the best position to carry out the drastic reforms advocated by the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, which included, for the United Nations, long-term programming, the discontinuance of the practice of annual budgeting, and the establishment of budget-programmes.

10. That concept of the new role which the Council could play in increasing the scope and effectiveness of the co-operation between the developed and the less developed countries would guide his delegation in the discussion of the important items on the Council's agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

