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PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

CONTENTS

	Page
Report of the Commission on the Status of Women (seventh session) (E/2401): report of the Social Committee (E/2486 and Add.1)	207
Report of the Social Commission (ninth session) (E/2437): report of the Social Committee (E/2481 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1)	209
Programme of concerted practical action in the social field of the United Nations and the specialized agencies (General Assembly resolution 535 (VI), Council resolution 434 (XIV)) (E/C.2/349, E/C.2/350, E/CN.5/231 and Corr.2 and 3 and Add.1 to 5, E/2422, E/2466, E/2467, E/2468, E/2485, E/L.541/Rev.1 and Add.1, E/L.544 and Corr.2 and E/L.545) (resumed from the 735th meeting)	209

President: Mr. Raymond SCHEYVEN (Belgium).

Present:

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, China, Cuba, Egypt, France, India, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following countries: Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Netherlands.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization.

Report of the Commission on the Status of Women (seventh session) (E/2401): report of the Social Committee (E/2486 and Add.1)

[Agenda item 18]

1. The PRESIDENT, after welcoming the observer for the Government of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Nosek, drew the Council's attention to the report of the Social Committee (E/2486) on the *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women (seventh session)* (E/2401),¹ which contained a number of draft resolutions recommended to the Council for adoption, together with a record of the votes by which the Committee had approved them. The Council also had before it a statement of financial implications submitted by the Secretary-General under rule 34 of the rules of procedure (E/2486/Add.1).

2. He then put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution A.

Draft resolution A was adopted by 17 votes to none.

¹ See: *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixteenth Session, Supplement No. 2.*

3. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the fact that in draft resolution B, in the first paragraph of Article 8 of the proposed Convention on the Nationality of Married Persons, a space had been left blank after the word "article(s)". The numbers of the articles in question would be filled in by the Commission on the Status of Women, at its eighth session, after the Secretary-General had received governments' comments upon the proposed Convention.

4. Mr. RIVAS (Venezuela), supported by Mrs. FLOURET (Argentina) and Mr. PEROTTI (Uruguay), pointed out that, despite the Social Committee's decision that the word "*considerado*" be substituted for the word "*estudiado*" in the third paragraph of the Spanish text of the draft resolution (E/2486) in order to make it correspond more closely with the expression used in the original (English) text ("*considered*"), the change had not been incorporated in the text before the Council.

5. Mr. AZMI (Egypt) stated that the same applied to the French text. In accordance with the decision taken by the Social Committee, the word "*étudié*" in the operative paragraph of draft resolution B was to be replaced by the word "*examiné*".

6. Mr. VIRA (India) pointed out that in the English text of the second paragraph "*expediate*" should read "*expedite*".

It was decided that the drafting changes to the necessity for which the representatives of Venezuela, Egypt and India had drawn attention, should be incorporated in the text.

7. Mr. PEROTTI (Uruguay) explained that, although his delegation had voted against draft resolution B in the Social Committee, on the ground that its provisions would entail an undesirable delay in bringing the proposed Convention into force, he would vote in favour of it in the Council, since his delegation fully endorsed any resolution which would extend married women's rights. Complete equality of rights were enjoyed by men and women under the Uruguayan Constitution.

8. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution B, as emended (nationality of married women).

Draft resolution B, as emended, was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

9. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution C (status of women in private law).

Draft resolution C was adopted by 17 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

10. Mr. PEROTTI (Uruguay) observed that in subparagraph (b) of the operative part of draft resolution D,

first line, the French text "*femme*" did not precisely correspond with the Spanish "*mujer casada*".

It was decided that in the French text of the line in question the word "*marlée*" should be inserted after the word "*femme*".

11. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution D, as emended (status of women in private law).

Draft resolution D, as emended, was adopted by 16 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

12. Mr. AZMI (Egypt) explained that his abstention was due to the inclusion in the draft resolution of subparagraph (a) in the operative part. The Egyptian delegation was, in fact, anxious to safeguard the privileges of married women in Egypt and the Moslem countries generally.

13. Turning to draft resolution E, Mr. PEROTTI (Uruguay) proposed that in the Spanish text, last paragraph, the word "*Invita*" should be substituted for the word "*Pide*", in order to bring it into line with the French and English texts.

It was so agreed.

14. Mr. REYES (Philippines) asked that a separate vote be taken on the retention of the final phrase of the fourth paragraph: "which are or become Members of one or more of the specialized agencies of the United Nations or are or become parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice". As the Philippines representative had explained in the Social Committee, his delegation felt that the General Assembly's invitation to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention should be extended either on the principle of universality, that was, to all non-member States without exception, or on that of selectivity, by which the General Assembly would consider each invitation to a non-member State on its individual merits.

15. Mrs. CISELET (Belgium) asked that a separate vote be taken on the last paragraph.

The final phrase of the fourth paragraph was retained, 10 votes being cast in favour of its retention and 2 against, with 6 abstentions.

The fourth paragraph was adopted.

The last paragraph was retained, 9 votes being cast in favour of its retention and 5 against, with 4 abstentions.

16. Mr. PEROTTI (Uruguay), supported by Miss MAÑAS (Cuba), pointed out that in the Spanish text of the last paragraph the words "*en cumplimiento de*" required emendation to bring them into line with the French and English texts.

It was decided that an appropriate correction should be made in the Spanish text.

17. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution E as a whole, as emended (political rights of women).

Draft resolution E as a whole, as emended, was adopted by 14 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

18. Mrs. CISELET (Belgium) stated that her delegation had abstained from voting for the reasons given in the Social Committee, and particularly because the last paragraph of the resolution had been retained. That paragraph required States Parties to the Convention to report every two years on the measures taken by them to implement the provisions of the Convention. That requirement placed them in a less favourable position than non-signatory States.

19. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution F (political rights of women).

Draft resolution F was adopted unanimously.

20. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution G (equal pay for equal work).

Draft resolution G was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

21. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution H (educational opportunities for women).

Draft resolution H was adopted unanimously.

22. Turning to draft resolution I, Mr. PEROTTI (Uruguay) pointed out that in the Spanish text the word "*autóctono*", in the second line of the second paragraph, should read "*vernáculo*".

It was decided that the Spanish text should be modified accordingly.

23. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution I, as emended (educational opportunities for women).

Draft resolution I was adopted unanimously.

24. The PRESIDENT then put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution J in two parts.

Part I of draft resolution J was adopted by 17 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

Part II of draft resolution J was adopted by 13 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

25. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution J as a whole (technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women).

Draft resolution J as a whole was adopted by 15 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

26. Mr. HOARE (United Kingdom) said that he had abstained from voting on draft resolution J for reasons which had already been explained by his delegation in the Social Committee and related more particularly to part II, namely, that no satisfactory case had yet been made out for a special kind of technical assistance in that field; that the administrative issues underlying the resolution had not been properly discussed; and, in particular, that it was inappropriate for the Council to establish what might be regarded as a precedent when the whole question of technical assistance in the field of human rights had been referred to governments for their appreciation.

27. Miss LISSAC (France) recalled the reasons, explained in the Social Committee, for which her delegation had abstained. The French delegation did not disapprove of the principles contained in the draft resolution, but wished to leave the door open until the financial implications of part II of the resolution were better known.

28. Mrs. CISELET (Belgium) drew attention to a minor editorial change required in the French text of draft resolution K.

29. The PRESIDENT put to the vote the Social Committee's draft resolution K (questionnaire on Trust Territories as it relates to the status of women).

Draft resolution K was adopted by 17 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

30. Miss LISSAC (France) explained that her delegation had abstained on the grounds that the resolution added nothing of practical importance to the measures already taken to make known the situation existing in Trust Territories as regards the status of women.

31. Mr. MICHANEK (Sweden) explained that he had voted in favour of all the draft resolutions except three. On those three he had abstained for reasons which he had already explained in the Social Committee. He had abstained from voting on draft resolution B (nationality of married women) because he did not think that the course of action proposed was the most practical one at the present juncture. In the case of draft resolution G (equal pay for equal work) he had abstained because, though his government accepted the principle involved, it was not prepared to interfere in the free negotiations between the parties in the open labour market. In the case of draft resolution J (technical assistance programmes in relation to the status of women) his abstention should be understood to mean that the Swedish Government reserved its position in the matter till a later date since, in its view, the resolution had not been adequately prepared.

32. Mr. ORLOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had voted in favour of all the draft resolutions. He hoped, however, that the Commission on the Status of Women would be able, at its eighth session, to make good the shortcomings in its work to which the Soviet Union representative had drawn attention in the Social Committee.

33. Mr. PLEIĆ (Yugoslavia) explained that he would have voted in favour of draft resolution A had he been present when the vote on that resolution had been taken.

34. The PRESIDENT congratulated the Social Committee on its successful labours, and paid a tribute to the Chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women, Miss Bernardino. The resolutions which the Council had just adopted showed that equal rights for men and women in all fields were on the way to realization.

35. He then declared completed the Council's work on item 18 of its agenda.

Report of the Social Commission (ninth session) (E/2437): ² report of the Social Committee (E/2481 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1)

[Agenda item 11]

36. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the draft resolution contained in document E/2481.

37. Mr. ORLOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) referred to the observations made by the Soviet Union representative in the Social Committee on the report of the ninth session of the Social Commission. For the reasons then given he could not subscribe to the adoption of the work programme of the Social Commission for 1954-55, and would therefore abstain from voting.

38. Mr. AZMI (Egypt) requested, for the reasons he had already explained in the Social Committee, that a separate vote be taken on paragraph 2 of the Social Committee's draft resolution (E/2481).

Paragraph 2 was adopted by 15 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

39. The PRESIDENT then put to the vote the draft resolution on the report of the ninth session of the Social Commission (E/2481).

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 15 votes to none with 3 abstentions.

Programme of concerted practical action in the social field of the United Nations and the specialized agencies (General Assembly resolution 535 (VI), Council resolution 434 (XIV)) (E/C.2/349, E/C.2/350, E/CN.5/291 and Corr.2 and 3 and Add.1 to 5, E/2422, E/2466, E/2467, E/2468, E/2485, E/L.541/Rev.1 and Add.1, E/L.544 and Corr.2, and E/L.545) (resumed from the 735th meeting)

[Agenda item 10]

40. The PRESIDENT invited the Director of the Division of Social Welfare to make a statement in response to the question put by the United States representative at the 735th meeting about the meaning of the term "community organization and development".

41. Miss HENDERSON (Secretariat) said that the meaning of the term "community organization and development" and its relation to such programmes as those of agricultural extension, environmental sanitation and fundamental education had recently been defined by an *ad hoc* meeting of technical officers of the United Nations and specialized agencies held in Geneva from 9-11 July 1953 at the request of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. "Community organization and development" denoted the various processes by which communities could raise their standard of living. Those processes included the organization of services for such purposes as social welfare, education and the development of small-scale industries. The carrying out of such programmes required a combination of outside assistance and local effort. Community development might begin in one single field such as education or

² See: *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixteenth Session, Supplement No. 7.*

health, but needed to be developed to cover the whole range of community problems. The United Nations and specialized agencies could help governments in promoting such development, for instance through such activities as welfare centres, aided self-help, housing, home economics, local health demonstration areas, co-operatives and fundamental education.

42. Since the Social Commission had raised in particular the question of the relation of fundamental education to community development, she wished to draw the Council's attention to document E/2466, which included a definition of that term adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Conference. Fundamental education was often an appropriate first stage of community development, by which a conscious effort was made to make the people in an under-developed country aware of their potentialities and to assist them to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills.

43. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) expressed his appreciation of the definition supplied, which, he believed, would be of assistance in the development of community projects as one of the major forms of social action.

44. Mr. MAHEU (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that his Organization had noted with satisfaction the agreement reached between representatives of the Secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies on the definition of the phrase "development of local communities". The Executive Board of UNESCO had dealt with that problem at its 34th session. As certain misgivings had been expressed in the Social Commission, the Executive Board of UNESCO had considered it necessary to call the attention of the Economic and Social Council to the definition given by UNESCO to fundamental education (E/2466). The misgivings had now been set at rest, and his Organization was satisfied with the explanations given.

45. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) suggested that since the latest amendments to resolution B (E/2437) had not yet been distributed in all the working languages, the Council could save time by turning to the draft resolution submitted by his delegation (E/L.544 and Corr.2).

46. Mr. SOLOVYOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), supported the Polish representative.

There being no objection, the Council decided to consider first the Polish draft resolution.

47. At the suggestion of Mr. SHAW (Australia), the PRESIDENT invited the representative of the International Labour Organisation to explain that agency's activity in the field of social insurance and social security.

48. Mr. FANO (International Labour Organisation) said that he was sure the work of his agency in the field of social security was well known. The question of social security had been and was still under continuous review, and the Organisation's work had recently culminated in the adoption at the 35th Session of the International Labour Conference of an extremely comprehen-

sive Convention on the subject. The Organisation did not regard its responsibilities in that direction as being thereby discharged, particularly in view of the fact that social security was one of the most important questions on which governments required the expert assistance that the Organisation could give. He therefore believed that questions of social insurance and social security should continue to be dealt with by the International Labour Organisation.

49. Mr. SOLOVYOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that if the Council decided to study the programme of social security presented by the International Conference for the Advancement, Improvement and Extension of Social Insurance and Social Security, as proposed in the preamble of the Polish draft resolution, the International Labour Organisation would be entirely free to take part in the debate.

50. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said that his delegation could not vote for the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2), which sought to replace a number of important international instruments, treaties and inter-governmental declarations by a statement elaborated by a single non-governmental organization, which, moreover, represented only the views of one political camp. It would be completely inappropriate for the Council to take that course.

51. Mr. SHAW (Australia) referred to the very detailed discussions which had taken place in recent years in the International Labour Organisation, which had led to the formulation of draft conventions on minimum and maximum standards of social security. All Member States had been represented at those discussions by delegations of the government, of employers and of workers, and exhaustive exchanges of views had taken place. It would in his view be improper to seek to withdraw from the Organisation an important subject for which it had hitherto been responsible, and to bring it before the Economic and Social Council. His delegation would therefore be unable to vote for the draft resolution.

52. Mr. SOLOVYOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) contested the validity of the United States representative's argument that the programme drawn up by the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) represented only the one-sided views of a limited section of the workers: WFTU's programme had been developed by the representatives of fifty-nine countries of various political complexions. Nor could he agree with the Australian representative that the experience of the International Labour Organisation would be left out of account if the Council itself gave consideration to WFTU's programme. On the contrary, he believed that consideration of the programme would lead to an enrichment of international experience.

53. Mr. AZMI (Egypt) was convinced that the specialized agencies, of all the United Nations bodies, performed the most useful functions; besides, it was advisable to use every available means to ensure progress. In order to make the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2) acceptable to the Council, he therefore proposed: first, that a separate vote be taken on the first part of the first sentence of the preamble: "Having considered the

memorandum by the World Federation of Trade Unions (E/2422) and its enclosed programme of social security", the rest of the sentence to be deleted; and secondly, that paragraphs 1 and 2 of the operative part should be deleted.

54. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) thought the arguments adduced against discussing in the Council the programme of WFTU, if carried to their logical conclusion, would result in the paralysis of the Council, for there was hardly a field of activity which was not within the purview of one or other of the specialized agencies. The United Nations, in its agreements with the specialized agencies, did not renounce its right to deal directly with any problem. The purpose of the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2) was not to usurp the function of the International Labour Organisation but merely to incorporate in the Council's plan of work for 1953-54 the study of a programme of social security elaborated by a large and representative international conference all of whose participants had had direct experience of the problems involved. The attitude of the United States delegation was inconsistent with the joint amendment which it was supporting (E/L.541/Rev.1), which advocated in its paragraph 6 (d) the participation of the appropriate non-governmental organizations in the implementation of international programmes in the social field. Some delegations appeared to be trying to shelter behind the International Labour Organisation in order to avoid any discussion of a concrete programme of social welfare, and to limit themselves to purely academic debate. He was convinced that the Council could only be helped in its study of the social situation by the experience of a non-governmental organization of the size and standing of WFTU.

55. The Polish resolution was drafted in very restrained terms, and by voting for it no delegation would commit itself to anything more than the consideration of the WFTU programme at a future date. He believed it would be in the interests of the Council and of its future efficacy that the draft resolution should be adopted unanimously.

56. Mrs. CISELET (Belgium) said that her delegation would vote against the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2), because in its opinion it would serve no useful purpose. Moreover, the Belgian delegation was convinced that the International Labour Organisation had all the necessary authority to deal with questions relating to social security. Her delegation's attitude was in conformity with its traditional stand on such matters, which was to leave the specialized agencies free to act each within its own province, the role of the Council being essentially one of co-ordination. Furthermore, the Council could quite well deal with the problems in question when the report of the International Labour Organisation came up for discussion.

57. Mr. VIRA (India) agreed with the Egyptian representative that proposals submitted by a recognized non-governmental organization ought to be given due consideration. He supported the Egyptian amendments to the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2), but also suggested that the words "as a problem of priority

importance" should be deleted from the last paragraph.

58. Mr. SHAW (Australia) pointed out that the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2) aimed, on the one hand, at giving the problem of social security priority in the Council's programme, and, on the other hand, at making the WFTU programme the basis of the Council's studies. With regard to the first point, the Annex to draft resolution B adopted at the ninth session of the Social Commission on the programme of concerted practical action in the social field (E/2437) already included among the activities to be given priority "projects which introduce, extend and improve social security measures such as assistance in old age, unemployment and disability" (paragraph 5 (d)). That priority had been reaffirmed and even strengthened in the revised joint amendment (E/L.541/Rev.1).

59. As to the second point, WFTU was represented at sessions of the International Labour Conference, and had had ample opportunity to put forward its views during the debates there. He considered it would be quite inadmissible for the Council to take as the basis for its studies the programme of one member of a larger organization which was dealing with the matter. The International Labour Organisation itself might be asked to study the WFTU programme and make a full report on the whole question of social security.

60. Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland) maintained that the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2) did not imply that the WFTU programme should be taken as the basis for the United Nations programme in the social field, but merely that it would be studied and reviewed in the course of the Council's own work on the subject. Nor was it proposed that the WFTU programme should be the only one to be taken into consideration. Other non-governmental organizations had access to the Council and their comments and views could be made known when the programme came up for discussion, thereby implementing paragraph 6 (d) of the revised joint amendment (E/L.541/Rev.1), to resolution B of the Social Commission. For those reasons, he would again appeal to the Council to support the Polish draft resolution.

61. Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) said that in his view the draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2) was intended to by-pass, or even to undermine the position of the International Labour Organisation. The Council had a duty to assist in the co-ordination of the various parts of the work of the United Nations, and when a specialized agency existed with primary responsibility in a particular field, a proposal which would tend to deprive that organization of its functions could not be entertained. The value of the Organisation's work was well known, and the representatives of the workers participated in its debates and had full voting rights there. He was therefore fully convinced that the problem of social security was in the best possible hands. The Polish draft resolution singled out one particular organization as representative, thereby ignoring the existence of other organizations working in the same field. He would not be able to vote for the draft resolution or any part thereof.

62. Mr. SOLOVYOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) considered that it would not be right to refuse to study the programme put forward by a non-governmental organization on one of the most vital problems affecting the workers, but to refer the matter to a specialized agency which had hitherto produced little of positive help to the overwhelming majority of the population of the world. When the International Labour Organisation had developed some really practical recommendations in that field, the Council could, in studying the WFTU programme, take account of its proposals. Unfortunately, the participation of the workers in the International Labour Organisation was insignificant, and their views were often ignored or belittled. The Council would be acting fully in accordance with its terms of reference by making a positive approach to the solution of one of the world's most vital problems.

63. Mr. FANO (International Labour Organisation) said that the Organisation was at the disposal of the Council if the latter wished to refer any particular question to it. While the subject of social security came specifically within the competence of the International Labour Organisation, there was no doubt that the Council had the prerogative to keep the matter under review and if it so desired, to request the Organisation to prepare a report.

64. The PRESIDENT put the Polish draft resolution (E/L.544 and Corr.2), to the vote paragraph by paragraph.

The first part of the preamble, reading "The Economic and Social Council, having considered the memorandum by the World Federation of Trade Unions (E/2422) and its

enclosed programme of social security" was rejected by 11 votes to 4, with 3 abstentions.

The second part of the preamble was rejected by 12 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions.

Paragraph 1 of the operative part was rejected by 12 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions.

Paragraph 2 of the operative part was rejected by 13 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.

The Indian verbal amendment to paragraph 3 of the operative part was adopted by 1 vote to none, with 17 abstentions.

Paragraph 3 of the operative part, as amended, was rejected by 13 votes to 4, with 1 abstention.

65. Mrs. FLOURET (Argentina), explaining her vote, said that while her Government attached the greatest importance to the question of social security and social insurance, she did not consider it possible to embark on a consideration of that problem on the basis of a particular programme such as that submitted by WFTU.

66. Mr. PLEIĆ (Yugoslavia), explaining his vote, said that he did not consider that it would be in accordance with either the Charter or the Council's rules governing consultation with the non-governmental organizations for such an important problem as that of social security to be discussed on the basis of the conclusions and recommendations of an international conference from which the representatives of many national organizations had been excluded, and at which certain countries had been entirely unrepresented.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.