



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 57th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUGUME (Uganda)

later: Mr. HAMER (Netherlands)

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AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/41/3, 180, 183, 189, 213, 274 and Add.1, 315, 317 and Add.1, 326, 337, 343, 354, 398, 461 and Corr.1, 462, 494, 507, 523, 607, 667, 710, 719, 729, 771, 778 and 787; A/C.3/41/1, 41/3, 41/6, 41/10 and 41/11; A/C.3/41/L.1, L.18/Rev.1, L.33, L.57/Rev.1, L.78, L.80, L.81, L.82, L.85, L.86, L.87, L.88, L.89, L.90, L.91, L.92, L.93, L.94 and L.95)

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.94

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the draft resolution had been introduced at the previous meeting.
2. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) announced that, owing to an error by the Secretariat, Spain had been inadvertently omitted from the list of sponsors appearing on the text of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.18/Rev.1

3. Mr. VALDEZ (Peru), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of its sponsors, which had been joined by Spain, said that it was the result of extensive informal consultations and had as its background the Commission on Human Rights resolution 32 (XXXVII) in which the Commission had decided to appoint a special representative on the situation of human rights in El Salvador. He then reviewed the provisions of the draft resolution, which represented an effort to present an objective view of the situation and took into account different positions and interests. He hoped that the process of consultation which had preceded its revision would make its adoption by consensus possible.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.57/Rev.1

4. Ms. BORGES (Uruguay), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of its sponsors, reviewed its operative paragraphs and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus, without a vote.
5. Mr. FRUHLING (Sweden), introducing the amendments to draft resolution L.57/Rev.1 contained in document A/C.3/41/L.96, said that their object was to arrive at a balanced text capable of commanding broad support. The revised version of draft resolution L.57 appeared to contain only one change, namely, the replacement of the word "Decides" in operative paragraph 3 by the word "Recommends". Thus the amendments proposed in document L.96 were still pertinent.
6. The General Assembly at its fortieth session had decided that it should keep the matter of human rights in Guatemala under examination at the forty-first session. The sponsors of the amendments believed that it was up to the General Assembly to determine its own future action, and also that it should show continued interest in following the development of the situation in Guatemala. International

(Mr. Frühling, Sweden)

attention had undoubtedly contributed towards the return to a civil constitutional government in Guatemala. The new Government's clearly stated intention to improve the human rights situation, and the steps already taken towards that end, deserved the international community's support. At the same time, as everyone was aware, the process of improvement had only begun, and would have to continue if broad and lasting advances were to be achieved. That process, too, should be followed by the international community through the United Nations. That was the reasoning behind the amendment contained in paragraph 5 of document L.96 to the effect that the draft resolution, in its new operative paragraph 4, should provide for the continuation of the examination of the development of the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the next session of the General Assembly.

7. Despite measures taken by the new Government, independent reports of human rights violations in that country, including politically related assassinations and involuntary disappearances, still continued to be received. Concern at such violations had been expressed at an earlier stage of the Committee's work. That was the reasoning behind the proposal for a new operative paragraph 2 contained in paragraph 3 of document L.96. The sponsors of the amendments wished to recall that at the meeting held in Harare earlier in the year, the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Countries had expressed the hope that the Government of Guatemala would continue to take necessary measures in order to put an end to violence in that country and guarantee the broadest possible participation of all sectors of the population in the search for a political solution to the conflict, as well as for the full exercise of human rights.

8. He expressed regret that the sponsors of draft resolution L.57 had not thus far responded to the specific proposals put forward in document L.96, and reiterated the readiness of the sponsors of the amendments to engage in a dialogue.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.85

9. Mrs. SARANGEREL (Mongolia), introducing draft resolution L.85 on behalf of its sponsors, said that, although adequate shelter had been universally recognized as a basic human right for more than a quarter of a century, the overall situation with regard to shelter and basic services was deteriorating alarmingly. Today, approximately one quarter of the world's population did not have adequate shelter and lived in extremely unsanitary and unhealthy conditions. It was estimated that about 100 million people had no housing whatsoever. In order to focus attention on that situation and to seek solutions to the issues it raised, the General Assembly had proclaimed 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. The right to adequate housing, proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, could not be fully ensured without effective action at both the national and international levels. The draft resolution was designed to draw the attention of Member States to the problem, thus providing an impetus for efforts to achieve the goals of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and of a comprehensive shelter strategy.

(Mrs. Sarangerel, Mongolia)

10. Before submitting the draft resolution for the Committee's consideration, the sponsors had held consultations with other delegations, whose suggestions were reflected in the text of the draft. It was therefore hoped that the draft resolution would receive unanimous support.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications. A recorded vote had been requested and he accordingly invited the Committee to vote on the draft resolution.

12. A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None

Abstaining: Israel, United States.

13. Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.85 was adopted by 134 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.86

14. Miss LAFORTUNE (Canada), introducing draft resolution L.86, said that the delegations of Antigua and Barbuda had joined its sponsors. Its object was to express the international community's concern at the continuing refusal of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to allow the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights to visit the country and to address an urgent appeal to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to shoulder its responsibilities in the human rights field by fully co-operating with the Special Representative in his efforts to study the situation at close hand.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.87

15. Mr. RICHTER (German Democratic Republic), introducing draft resolution L.87 on behalf of its sponsors, said that the situation as regards Nazi, Fascist and neo-Fascist activities, and other forms of totalitarian ideologies and practices based on racial intolerance, hatred and terror, had by no means improved since the previous year. Human rights and fundamental freedoms were seriously endangered by the existence of groups of proponents of Fascist, neo-Fascist and other totalitarian ideologies in a number of countries and by the propaganda pursued by them. The groups and organizations concerned should by no means be regarded as splinter groups having no influence; after all, they had succeeded in establishing themselves in the parliaments of some countries. The text of the draft resolution was the result of extensive discussions and reflected the concerns expressed by members of the Committee at an earlier stage.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.88

16. Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), introducing draft resolution L.88 on behalf of Poland and his own delegation, said that the two sponsoring countries, like many others, had had direct experience of the policy and practice of the repellent crime of genocide. The focus of the draft resolution was to draw attention to the need to prevent the recurrence of such tragedies. The text was clear and self-explanatory and he hoped that, as at the previous session, it would receive the Committee's unanimous support.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.89

17. Mr. HYNES (Canada), introducing draft resolution L.89, said that, in addition to Sudan, whose co-sponsorship had already been announced, Colombia and Japan had also joined its sponsors. The aim of the draft resolution, which was closely modelled upon texts adopted at previous sessions, was to sustain the attention given by the international community to the phenomenon of mass exoduses. Although massive flows of refugees had abated since the late 1970s and early 1980s, the sponsors of the draft resolution believed that it was essential to ensure the continued vigilance of the international community in addressing the root causes of the phenomenon, especially human rights violations. To that end, they looked not to the creation of new institutions but rather to the development of mechanisms which would allow existing organs or institutions to work more effectively. An example of such a mechanism was the "early-warning system" established to gather information on potential refugee situations for the United Nations.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.90

18. Mr. STROHAL (Austria) introduced draft resolution L.90 and announced that Bolivia had joined its co-sponsors. The draft sought to promote a fair and humane administration of justice and aimed at ensuring the observance of absolutely necessary minimum guarantees in cases of capital punishment and at reducing possibilities of human rights violations in prisons, as well as all forms of summary or arbitrary executions.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.91

19. Mr. LEBAKINE (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), introducing draft resolution L.91, said that its chief aim was to promote a more profound understanding of the need for universal recognition of, and respect for, the rights of peoples as an integral element of respect for the rights of the individual. The two aspects were indivisible and could be said to form two sides of the same coin. The text of the draft was self-explanatory and he commended it to the Committee for adoption without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.92

20. Mrs. RODRIGUEZ PEREZ (Cuba), introducing the draft resolution, said that the sponsors hoped to focus attention on the intellectual, spiritual, cultural and moral advancement of humanity and on the creation of the conditions that promoted such advancement. Despite the efforts made to that end, social progress in the world was still inadequate and the draft resolution confirmed the need to make every possible effort to enhance the well-being of all people. The sponsors hoped that, in view of its eminently social character, the draft resolution would be well received and would be developed into an important instrument in the social field.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.93

21. Miss BYRNE (United States of America) hoped that the draft resolution would lead the United Nations to focus its attention upon one of the worst human rights situations in the present-day world, that in Cuba. It contained no extreme language or any statement that went beyond the facts. The Committee had repeatedly expressed its concern about human rights situations in a number of places; it must also express itself on the massive and gross violations taking place in Cuba.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.95

22. Mr. TROUVEROY (Belgium) introduced draft resolution L.95 on behalf of its sponsors and stressed the great importance which his delegation continued to attach to the promotion and protection of human rights at the regional level.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.1 and amendments thereto contained in document A/C.3/41/L.78

23. Mr. HACKETT (Department of International Economic and Social Affairs) drew attention to new operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.1, as proposed in document A/C.3/41/L.78, requesting the Secretary-General to prepare a draft framework of the substantive report called for in operative paragraph 5 and to submit it to the Commission for Social Development at its thirtieth session in order to allow the Commission to make suggestions with regard to the preparation of that report. However, section 6 of the programme budget for the current biennium, contained no provision for the preparation of such a report. It was the Secretary-General's intention, nevertheless, to prepare, within existing resources, the draft framework requested in proposed new operative paragraph 5. The length of the draft would be about three or four pages. The report would be an additional output to the work programme of subprogramme 6 of the programme global development issues and policies (under programme element 6.3).

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the amendments contained in document A/C.3/41/L.78.

25. It was so decided.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.1, as amended, without a vote.

27. It was so decided.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.33

28. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

29. Mrs. de BARISH (Costa Rica) said that the sponsors proposed two minor amendments to the text of the draft resolution. The word "deeply" should be inserted at the beginning of the fifth preambular paragraph and the words "for one year" should be inserted after the words "to extend" in subparagraph (a) of the operative paragraph.

30. Mr. MAHONEY (Gambia) said that his delegation had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

31. The CHAIRMAN said that a recorded vote had been requested on the draft resolution, as orally revised.

32. A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic,

Chad, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

33. Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.33, as orally revised, was adopted by 114 votes to 1, with 19 abstentions.

34. Mr. MELENDEZ (El Salvador) said that, had his delegation been present during the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.33, it would have voted in favour.

35. Ms. NYMAN (Finland), speaking in explanation of vote, said that the Nordic countries were deeply concerned at the cancellation of the 1986 session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. As an expert body, the Sub-Commission played an important role in the human rights sector of the United Nations and the cancellation of its session had had a disruptive effect on its programme of work. Her delegation had therefore abstained during the vote and hoped that the decision of the Committee would not establish a precedent for other bodies of the United Nations.

36. Mr. QUINN (Australia), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his delegation had abstained from voting because it was concerned about the procedural aspects of the draft resolution. It had been greatly distressed to have been required to vote on the subject of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in view of the efforts which were under way in the Commission on Human Rights to carry out reforms of the Sub-Commission. His delegation had been among the few to have publicly commented on the disruptive effect of the cancellation of the Sub-Commission's thirty-ninth session. While it supported the Sub-Commission's work, it was concerned that the cancellation of the

(Mr. Quinn, Australia)

1986 session should not constitute a precedent for other bodies affected by the financial crisis of the Organization.

37. Miss LAFORTUNE (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote, said that, for reasons of principle, her delegation had not supported the draft resolution, even though an expert nominated by her Government was currently a member of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. It would have been preferable for the General Assembly to have referred the matter to the Commission on Human Rights, which could have given full consideration to ways and means of ensuring the continuation of the Sub-Commission's work.

Draft decision A/C.3/41/L.80

38. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

39. Mr. MICALLEF (Malta) said that, while his delegation supported in principle the biennialization of the work of the Third Committee, it was concerned at the manner in which the issue had been brought before the Committee without any prior consultation or debate. A consensus should be reached before a decision was taken and Governments should be given enough time to consider the implications of such an important step. He therefore moved the adjournment of consideration of the draft decision until the forty-second session of the General Assembly and proposed that the full implications of the biennialization of items should be analysed in the report on the programme of work of the Committee.

40. Ms. YOUNG (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the member States of the European Community, said that she supported the need for rationalization of the Committee's work and felt that the biennialization of certain items had an important part to play in that process. While she would support any balanced proposals to achieve that goal, rationalization must be viewed in the context of the overall work of the Committee. The draft decision did not meet that criterion. The items selected did not represent a balance of the different issues considered by the Third Committee. It also created procedural problems and might even be defective in terms of the legislative authority on which the consideration of items by the Committee needed to be based. Moreover, the draft decision did not meet the stated goal of its sponsors to achieve substantial economies of time. It would therefore be better if an item on biennialization were examined by the Third Committee during the forty-second session of the General Assembly. That should be done in a systematic and general way in order to achieve a balanced agenda. If, however, the matter were put to a vote, her delegation would abstain.

41. Mrs. TAVARES de ALVAREZ (Dominican Republic) said that, while she supported in principle the attempt to rationalize the work of the Third Committee, it would be prudent to consider the draft proposal in greater depth. The items concerning aged persons and the disabled, in particular, required special attention. She therefore supported the motion moved by the representative of Malta to adjourn consideration of the question until the forty-second session of the General Assembly.

42. The CHAIRMAN read out rule 116 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and, in accordance with that rule, invited four delegations to take the floor, two in favour of the motion and two against, before the motion was put to the vote.

43. Mrs. WARZAZI (Morocco) said that it was not possible to reconcile the positions of all delegations and a decision should therefore be taken. While the questions of the aged and the disabled were undoubtedly important, significant developments that occurred during the year in those areas could be brought to the attention of the Committee under item 12.

44. Mr. VREEDZAAM (Suriname) supported the motion of the delegation of Malta.

45. The motion of the delegation of Malta to defer consideration of the draft decision until the forty-second session of the General Assembly was adopted by 73 votes to 8, with 36 abstentions.

46. Ms. SEAH (Singapore) said that her delegation had voted incorrectly and had intended to abstain.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.81

47. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

48. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) said that Uganda had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

49. The CHAIRMAN said that if he heard no objection he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.81 without a vote.

50. It was so decided.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.82

51. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

52. Ms. KAMAL (Secretary of the Committee) said that Uganda and Samoa had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

53. The CHAIRMAN said that if he heard no objection he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.82 without a vote.

54. It was so decided.

Draft resolutions A/C.3/41/L.88, L.89, L.90

55. The CHAIRMAN said that none of the draft resolutions under consideration had programme budget implications. Japan had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.89. If he heard no objection he would consider draft resolutions A/C.3/41/L.88, L.89, and L.90 to have been adopted without a vote.

56. It was so decided.

General debate (continued)

57. Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the guarantee of the right of peoples to peace was the most important prerequisite for the realization of fundamental human rights and freedoms. The question of human rights was the internal responsibility of sovereign States, although the international community must continue to search for a solution to massive and flagrant violations. The situation in southern Africa, the Arab territories occupied by Israel, Chile and El Salvador gave cause for concern.

58. Imperialist forces had again attempted to use the Third Committee in order to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, in flagrant disregard of the right of the Afghan people to advance on the path of development it had chosen. The report on Afghanistan (A/41/778) did not reflect the real situation in that country. It was the duty of every State to refrain from distorting human rights issues for its own ends. His delegation would oppose any resolution on the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

59. The revival of Nazi, Fascist, neo-Fascist and totalitarian practices in certain Western countries was particularly alarming because of the official support they enjoyed from certain ruling circles. It was essential to eradicate such ideologies before they spread. The United Nations should redouble its efforts to mobilize world public opinion against them.

60. Some representatives of Western countries had chosen to lecture national Governments and the international community on human rights, although they themselves had failed to abide fully by their obligations under the International Covenants on Human Rights. One country's concept of human rights could not be made the standard for the whole international community. Any attempt to bring ideology into relations between States could only hamper international co-operation.

61. Mr. HAMER (Netherlands) took the Chair.

62. Mr. BOUREIMA (Niger) said that the commitments entered into by Member States of the United Nations under its Charter were not confined to relations among nations. They should be extended to the rights of individuals, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and also in regional instruments such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which Niger had signed and ratified. That Charter reflected the measures that Niger, which was already a party to many international human rights instruments, was adopting at the national level through its own National Development Charter, currently at the drafting stage. Niger's aim

(Mr. Boureima, Niger)

was to build a society in which citizens would be provided with just remuneration for their labour, adequate subsistence, medical care and education and opportunities for personal development in freedom and dignity.

63. The spectacular progress made in science and technology should lead to mutual understanding, tolerance and co-operation for the benefit of all peoples and individuals. His delegation wished to appeal to all members of the international community to unite their efforts to ensure respect for human rights, an area in which much remained to be done. Further efforts should be made to enable the oppressed South African and Palestinian peoples to realize their legitimate aspirations. The persistence of the odious apartheid régime, with its continued illegal occupation of Namibia and denial of the most fundamental rights of its black citizens, as evidenced by the re-establishment of the state of emergency, was one of the most serious challenges faced by the Organization. In the Middle East, only the withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Palestinian territories would enable the Palestinian people to enjoy and exercise their fundamental and inalienable rights.

64. Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan) said that, with the further intensification of the imperialist cold war against the socialist and progressive countries and national liberation movements, the scope of the campaign of disinformation about alleged human rights violations in Afghanistan had developed into organized psychological warfare waged by imperialist circles and monopoly-controlled media, front organizations supposedly concerned with democracy and human rights such as the Heritage Foundation and Freedom House, and intelligence operatives who had infiltrated into Afghanistan. The aim of such activities was to prepare the ground for the discussion of the so-called human rights situation in Afghanistan in the relevant United Nations organs. The Afghan delegations had consistently co-operated with those bodies in providing authentic information.

65. The Government of Afghanistan had left no stone unturned in establishing democratic revolutionary legality. Afghanistan was now a party to virtually all human rights instruments and implemented their provisions except in those cases where they grossly contradicted the tenets of Shari'a. Its commitments under those instruments, as well as the historical, religious and traditional aspects of Afghan society, had been taken into account in the new legislation.

66. Despite that action, those who had masterminded the clearly politically-motivated propaganda war against the Afghan revolution had stepped up their hostile activities in various United Nations organs, turning a blind eye to the atrocities committed by their own allies in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, in South Africa and Namibia and elsewhere. Abetted and directed by United States imperialism, the opponents of Afghanistan had forced the adoption of resolutions in the Commission on Human Rights in brazen disregard of the principle of equal sovereignty and by exerting pressure on some Member States. Afghanistan had repeatedly cautioned against the dangerous consequences of irresponsibly approving resolutions which were based on unsubstantiated charges and which violated the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

67. A very dangerous precedent had been set by the Commission on Human Rights with the appointment as Special Rapporteur of a person from whom unbiased reporting could not be expected. The report (A/41/778), which contained nothing but false information, had been intended to serve as a rubber stamp for the groundless charges of those waging the premeditated campaign against Afghanistan. For those reasons, his Government had condemned the resolutions passed and declared that it would in no way recognize or co-operate with the Special Rapporteur.

68. The credibility of the report was in doubt, first of all, because the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Ermacora, who did not speak any Afghan language, had relied on disinformation provided through interpreters by the bandit groups he chose to call "opposition movements". In paragraph 10, he had suggested that the revolution itself and the democratic and just reforms implemented subsequently had been the cause of human rights violations, whereas in fact those reforms had ended a situation in which such violations had prevailed. Furthermore, the Special Rapporteur had omitted to mention some very important measures adopted to ensure the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and freedoms. His references to refugees were clearly not based on meticulous investigation. The Afghan Government had provided irrefutable facts on the number and situation of refugees, drawn from authoritative sources, including reports of United Nations agencies. He had deliberately distorted the facts in his allegations concerning the displacement of populations from the eastern to the western provinces. There was no resettlement plan as mentioned in paragraph 46; moreover, the Government's continuing policy of encouragement to nomadic populations to settle down and avail themselves of public services provided by the Government involved no coercion. Similarly, the free provision of land and assistance to landless peasants could be freely accepted or rejected by those concerned.

69. The report as a whole, replete as it was with groundless charges and gross distortions, had been based on one political consideration, namely, how to use the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan as a frame for charges against its sincere and trustworthy internationalist friend, the Soviet Union. The Afghan delegation categorically rejected the Special Rapporteur's report.

70. Mr. STROHAL (Austria) said that the Committee's review of human rights showed, in all too many countries, a continuing gap between the standards laid down in the various international instruments and reality. Of the tasks facing the international community in reducing that gap, he wished to refer more particularly to the question of monitoring compliance with international instruments and strengthening national and international promotion activities.

71. A significant element of the monitoring mechanism was the appointment of special rapporteurs or special representatives with the aim of helping to improve a particular human rights situation. Co-operation by all Member States seemed to be of particular importance in that regard. He wished to thank those States which already co-operated with the United Nations and to appeal to all others concerned to follow their example. Experience had shown that such co-operation facilitated the verification and elimination of violations. The thematic approach was

(Mr. Strohal, Austria)

particularly promising and Austria was following the work of the special rapporteurs dealing with arbitrary or summary executions and torture with special interest. Austria was, moreover, currently preparing to ratify the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. It also commended the excellent work of the Commission on Human Rights Working Group on disappearances and the co-operation by a growing number of countries with that Group.

72. In view of the important role of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in the monitoring process, the Austrian Government regretted the cancellation of the Sub-Commission's 1986 session and urged the Secretary-General to ensure that the 1987 session be adequately prepared and serviced. While he was aware that budgetary constraints had also been responsible for the format of the reports of the special rapporteurs to the Assembly, he urged that complete reports be made available and therefore fully supported the draft decision on that subject.

73. The human rights sector should be spared any further budgetary cuts and ways must be found to ensure adequate funding in order to fulfil the provisions of the Charter. Clearer priorities with regard to central human rights issues should be set, with a view to avoiding any unnecessary politicization of the debates.

74. His delegation regretted that financial constraints were also affecting activities contributing to the protection and promotion of human rights, such as those conducted under the advisory services of the Centre for Human Rights. His delegation wished to pay a special tribute to the many non-governmental organizations which had played an increasingly important role in the promotion of human rights in recent years. The documentation of the seminar they had held on the occasion of the cancellation of the 1986 session of the Sub-Commission deserved the widest possible readership.

75. Regional standard-setting and monitoring activities, such as those of the Council of Europe, were also important. His delegation welcomed the recent entry into force of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, which would certainly facilitate further ratification of, or accession to, the International Covenants.

76. The need for interaction between standard-setting and monitoring seemed particularly apparent in the administration of justice. His delegation was submitting a draft resolution on that question.

77. His Government welcomed cases where co-operation between countries and the relevant United Nations bodies had led to an improvement in the human rights situation in the previous year. That result militated in favour of closer co-operation between those bodies and countries where serious human rights problems persisted. International concern must be seen not as criticism of sovereign Governments, but as a contribution to an improvement of the situation and an expression of universal responsibility for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

78. Mr. PEREZ (Panama) stressed the importance of the monitoring role of the Commission on Human Rights as a basis for specific action to improve the status of human rights in various regions. It was gratifying that various Latin American countries had co-operated with the special rapporteurs appointed by the Commission. The international community should support the endeavours to promote fundamental freedoms of those Latin American States that had recently returned to democracy. Unfortunately, there were some Governments that refused to co-operate with the Commission; they should change their attitude and demonstrate a desire to make progress towards respect for human rights.

79. His delegation welcomed the progress made by Guatemala towards democracy, and appreciated that changes could not be made overnight. Equally, the course adopted by the Government of El Salvador indicated a desire to promote a stable environment in which respect for human rights could be assured.

80. It was essential for the United Nations to treat human rights questions with the utmost gravity and to demonstrate its impartiality by not facilitating political exploitation of human rights issues. Otherwise the Organization would undermine efforts to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

81. His delegation regretted that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had been unable to hold its thirty-ninth session as scheduled. It was important to maintain continuity in the Sub-Commission's work. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.33.

82. The international community could not remain indifferent to the human rights violations suffered by the chronically poor and homeless, who constituted a third of the world's population, including some 20 million in Latin America. Accordingly, his delegation vigorously supported the proclamation of 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, and the goal of providing adequate housing for all by the year 2000. His Government had instituted specific programmes to tackle the problems of the homeless and destitute in Panama. Such government action was necessary to resolve the housing problems experienced in a majority of countries. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.85.

83. Mr. BAGBENI (Zaire), said that the allegation made earlier by the representative of Sweden that Zaire was a country which practised torture could only be the result of ignorance. Zaire's relations with Sweden had been excellent ever since its accession to independence, when the United Nations as a whole had assisted it in consolidating its political independence. His Government had adopted numerous measures to ensure closer co-operation between Zaire and all United Nations bodies concerned with the protection of human rights. The existence of such co-operation was demonstrated by the recent visit to Zaire of an emissary of the Commission on Human Rights, who had enjoyed the full support of the competent authorities. It was his delegation's wish that the same emissary might visit Sweden in order to inquire into cases of human rights violations there, and more particularly of infringements of the dignity of migrant workers and their families. Zaire had no lessons to receive from Sweden in the human rights field.

(Mr. Bagbeni, Zaire)

84. The Swedish representative's injurious allegations formed part of a broader campaign waged by certain countries, for undisclosed reasons, against the stability, prosperity and peace which reigned in Zaire. Amnesty International, having become an instrument of propaganda used for the dissemination of discriminatory information, was being manipulated to that end by certain wealthy countries whose own human rights violations and racist practices never formed the subject of Amnesty International reports. He categorically rejected all the unfounded charges levelled by the Swedish representative against Zaire.

85. Ms. RACHID LICHI (Paraguay) said it was strange that the representative of Cuba had referred to Paraguay as a Latin American dictatorship. It was well known that the Cuban Government was reliant on an extra-continental Power. Paraguay had a duly constituted, elected Government. It would be of interest to know when elections had last been held in Cuba.

86. Mr. YAKOVLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the representative of Canada had made a number of false allegations against the Soviet Union and various other countries with different political and social systems. His time would have been better spent in informing the Committee of human rights violations in Canada itself, including the inequitable treatment accorded French Canadians, discrimination against women, racial discrimination against blacks and the unequal status of indigenous peoples. The Committee might note the low life expectancy and high mortality rate among Eskimos. Canada's strictures on South Africa rang hollow in the light of the Canadian Government's treatment of its indigenous peoples.

87. Mr. DAMM (Chile) said that his delegation would overlook the comments made by the representative of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic since it did not really exist, being a mere fiction created by the Soviet Union in order to secure an additional vote at the United Nations.

88. Mr. OGURTSOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation did not wish to become involved in an exchange of discourtesies with the representative of Chile.

89. Mr. MELENDEZ (El Salvador) said the representative of Cuba should note that the Government of El Salvador had been internationally recognized. Since the establishment of the freely elected Government of El Salvador, the reports on the status of human rights in El Salvador had testified to an improvement, reflecting the Government's commitment to human rights. Although problems persisted, his Government was determined to continue to make progress. The comments made by the representative of Cuba, who had concentrated on the problem areas in El Salvador, had been motivated by political considerations. In particular, the Government of El Salvador was seeking to correct the abuses of authority formerly perpetrated by elements of the armed forces. The armed forces now obeyed the Government, which was seeking to humanize the conflict that persisted in the country.

90. Mr. LEWIS (Canada) said that the Soviet statement was silly and slanderous, filled with wilful distortions. Discrimination was prohibited under the Canadian Constitution, and talks were currently being held between the Government and representatives of aboriginal groups concerning land claims and other issues. Indeed, representatives of indigenous groups were free to state their case before international forums, which did not appear to be true of minorities in the Soviet Union. Although Canada did have some human rights problems, such as a degree of inequality between men and women, they paled in comparison with the situation in the Soviet Union, where the so-called crime of parasitism, among others, made the Soviet legal system an Orwellian tool of repression. Indeed, the Soviet stance on human rights made it difficult for the international community to give credence to its pronouncements in any other area, such as arms control.
91. Mrs. RODRIGUEZ PEREZ (Cuba) said that the remarks made by the representative of Paraguay could not be regarded as serious. Her delegation did not agree that the Government of El Salvador was making the progress it maintained. Finally, the representative of Canada should learn to distinguish between reality and unreality.
92. Mr. YAKOVLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that despite the remarks made by its representative, Canada, was no paradise for its native peoples. However, it did seem to offer a refuge for Nazi war criminals.
93. Mrs. BOKOVA (Bulgaria) said that the representative of Canada was apparently ignorant of the status of the Muslim minority in Bulgaria. The Canadian claim to be concerned about human rights violations wherever they occurred should be treated with some scepticism, since Canada failed to comment on violations committed by its allies, an omission which was prompted by political considerations of the lowest kind. The Canadian remarks were a regrettable example of doublespeak.
94. Mr. TANASA (Romania) said that the remarks made by the representative of Canada were completely irrelevant. The Canadian representative seemed bent on creating artificial problems. If Canada was so concerned by the status of diplomats and international civil servants, it should make greater efforts to protect diplomatic missions in Canada itself.
95. Mr. LEWIS (Canada) said that his delegation would be happy to learn more about minorities in Bulgaria, but the Bulgarian delegation might take note of the comments made by the representative of Turkey concerning the tragic situation of the minority Turkish population in Bulgaria. The Government of Romania should allow Mr. Liviu Bota to return to his place of work and resign, if such was his desire. With regard to the comments made by the representative of the Soviet Union, Canada was no paradise for its indigenous peoples, but the Government was endeavouring to make progress in that area. With respect to the alleged harbouring of war criminals, a special commission had been established to investigate the matter, and a copy of its report could be made available to the Soviet Union in due course. The essential point was that human rights issues were dealt with in Canada, whereas in some countries they became part of the fabric of deception.
96. Mr. TANASA (Romania) said that the representative of Canada had not addressed the last point he had raised.