

United Nations
**GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY**

SEVENTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



**THIRD COMMITTEE, 1170th
 MEETING**

Thursday, 1 November 1962,
 at 10.45 a.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 48:</i>	
<i>Manifestations of racial prejudice and national and religious intolerance (continued)</i>	
<i>General debate (continued)</i>	185

Chairman: Mr. Nemi Chandra KASLIWAL
 (India).

AGENDA ITEM 48

Manifestations of racial prejudice and national and religious intolerance (A/5129, A/C.3/L.1006/Rev.5, A/C.3/L.1008/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1009/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.1010-1012) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. DONKOR (Ghana) observed that General Assembly resolution 1510 (XV) should be supplemented in such a way as to strengthen it, and for that reason he supported the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 826 B (XV/II). Since manifestations of prejudice and intolerance stemmed from mental attitudes, the situation must be remedied by education, including social education among adults. He appreciated the action of those Governments which had adopted legislation against discrimination, and hoped that others would follow their example. He would vote in favour of the amendment of Costa Rica and the United Kingdom (A/C.3/L.1008/Rev.1) and of the three-Power amendment (A/C.3/L.1009/Rev.1); both would strengthen the Council's draft resolution.
2. His delegation had co-sponsored the revised draft resolution regarding the preparation of a convention on the elimination of racial discrimination (A/C.3/L.1006/Rev.5) because, despite the many condemnatory resolutions adopted by the United Nations and other bodies, manifestations of the kind under discussion still occurred in many parts of the world. He hoped that most delegations would support the latest revised version.
3. He thanked the Czechoslovak delegation for its excellent working paper (A/C.3/L.1010) concerning a draft international convention, and reserved the right to speak later on that document.
4. Mr. ARANYI (Hungary) recalled that great emphasis had been laid, at the thirty-fourth session of the Economic and Social Council, on the interrelationship between economic and social development. Certain countries had relatively high standards economically but grave shortcomings in social and human rights matters, and there was no doubt that manifestations of prejudice were closely connected with the economic and social situation. In multiracial

societies, the degree of economic control exercised by the whites certainly affected the civil rights of the indigenous peoples. Where discriminatory practices existed, education to accept others as equals was necessary; but education alone was not sufficient, especially in countries where such practices were deep-rooted and bolstered by discriminatory legislation. Consequently, any international convention must prohibit such legislation.

5. Although discrimination did not exist in Hungary, and only about 3 per cent of the population was non-Hungarian, the rights of other nationalities were protected in the constitution. Those minorities were allowed to study in their mother tongue and to foster their own cultures, and they took full part in civil and political activities.

6. He fully supported the revised draft resolution calling for a convention and he hoped that it would be adopted unanimously as a step towards the elimination of racial discrimination. A declaration might be useful, but that most important task was to prepare and adopt an international convention, which should be on the lines of the Czechoslovak working paper. His delegation would also support the Council's resolution.

7. Mr. TEKLE (Ethiopia) remarked that he belonged to a country where various ethnic groups lived happily together, and he was gratified at the serious consideration being given to the item under discussion. Discrimination existed, to a greater or lesser degree, in every part of the world, but it was only proper that the Committee's main concern should be with those areas where discrimination based on race and colour was systematically applied and continued to dominate all phases of life, although specifically forbidden by the United Nations Charter. Ethiopia utterly condemned the erroneous racial doctrines which had been eloquently refuted by the representatives of Mauritania and Chile. Effective measures must be taken, and he would vote for both draft resolutions before the Committee, which represented a step forward.

8. Mr. NEDBAILO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) noted that the three-Power Amendment would introduce the words "through education and information media" into operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council. In his view, the paragraph would then become no more than an abbreviated reiteration of operative paragraph 1. The Council's text followed a logical sequence--paragraph 1 dealt with education, paragraph 2 referred to legislation, and paragraph 3 covered any other possible action, which might well be administrative. The administrative authorities had tremendous opportunities for taking anti-discrimination measures--for instance, by providing social services, allowing access to occupations and pro-

essions and ensuring the enjoyment of political rights, such as equality in voting and the safety of voters.

9. With reference to the Liberian amendment (A/C.3/L.1012) to the revised draft resolution calling for a convention, he pointed out that the Commission on Human Rights had decided to continue, at its nineteenth session, its consideration of a set of draft principles on freedom and non-discrimination in the matter of religious rights and practices.^{1/} The type of document in which the principles should be embodied would be decided when they all had been approved by the Commission; in those circumstances, it seemed premature to include religious discrimination in the subjects to be covered by the international convention envisaged in the joint draft resolution, which should therefore deal only with racial discrimination.

10. The phrasing of the Saudi Arabian amendment (A/C.3/L.1011) was too vague, and he could not support it. He preferred the fifth revised text of the draft resolution, which specifically requested the Economic and Social Council to ask the Commission on Human Rights to prepare a draft convention. Both draft resolutions adopted a very broad approach, and they should not be weakened or narrowed in any way; he would therefore support them as they stood.

11. Miss RENJU (Tanganyika) said that her Government based its policy on faith in mankind and the determination to uphold the dignity of man. It believed that differences between people were unimportant in comparison with their common humanity. Thus there could be no doubt about her delegation's position on the matter under consideration, as on all questions related to injustice. The people of Tanganyika had no unfriendly feelings towards any people, but felt bitter hostility to Governments whose very existence was based on racial discrimination. They assured their brothers that justice would triumph in the end, and sounded a warning to the die-hards of South Africa, the Rhodesias, Angola and Mozambique. Tanganyika did not subscribe to the theories of multiracialism but believed in a non-racial society where a man's colour or the shape of his nose did not matter. She agreed with other speakers that discrimination and all its manifestations were a direct product of colonialism, both the old and the new kind. Colonialism had not only produced generations imbued with feelings of inferiority but had also tried to shield its own weakness by instilling in the whites belief in the theory of the super-race. There were countries in which discriminatory practices were carried on under other guises, though those countries would have the world think that they too were champions of human rights.

12. The Press, the churches, national and international organizations and other institutions could do much to change the attitudes which led to discrimination. It was regrettable that many such institutions had in the past been used to draw the races even further apart. While legislation was important, laws alone could do little unless public opinion was simultaneously re-educated. In that respect women could achieve a great deal, and she welcomed any efforts made by them individually or jointly.

13. Her delegation would vote without reservation for the revised draft resolution calling for a convention

and for the Liberian amendment. It would also vote for the draft resolution submitted by the Economic and Social Council together with the three-Power amendment thereto.

14. Mr. WHITE (Australia) recalled that one of the most deplorable expressions of Nazism had been the persecution of the Jews, which had later been extended to other racial and political minorities and dissenters. The lesson to be drawn was that, in a community where such discriminations were allowed to exist, no one was safe in the long run; attacks on one group, whether racial, religious or political, became attacks on human dignity as such. He welcomed the vigilance of those countries which had taken police and court action against persons associated with recent outbreaks of anti-semitic activity and rabble-rousing.

15. He must also make specific mention of the fact that Jewish communities throughout the world had expressed concern at the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union, where there had been criticism of the Jews by the Press and radio, and even by some Soviet authorities, together with the restriction of Jewish religious observances and official action against individual Jews. If the USSR had difficulty in giving Jews full freedom to practice their religion, it had a moral obligation, under article 13 paragraph 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to permit them to leave the country.

16. No society and no State was free from reproach, but all had an obligation under the Charter of the United Nations to promote human rights, and the standards at which they should aim had been spelt out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In their conduct of affairs, Governments should pursue policies of non-discrimination, not merely in its negative aspect, but positively, by promoting human rights for everyone. While it was more difficult to control private manifestations of prejudice, much could be done by education and by the influence on public opinion of official institutions and prominent persons. The Australian Government, backed by a vigilant public opinion and by religious and other groups, was opposed to discrimination anywhere on grounds of race, colour or religion, and was determined to root it out wherever it might still be found in its own country. That involved not only legislation, but also a process of building up a climate of confidence between different groups, and social and economic policies that would facilitate the adjustment of remaining differences or tensions. Consequently, his delegation was in general agreement with the draft resolutions before the Committee.

17. Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that she had been astonished to hear the Australian representative make an undeserved attack on her country. There was not a shred of truth in his charges, which were intended not to seek out areas of discrimination but merely to blacken the name of the USSR. There was in the USSR no discrimination against Jews or any other nationality or group, and no fact to prove the contrary could possibly be presented. Charges of anti-semitism in the USSR stemmed either from ignorance or from a rabid hatred of communism. It was a historical fact that the USSR had at the very outset abolished the oppression of national minorities and taken drastic measures to root out all forms of discrimination.

^{1/} See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 5 (E/3616/Rev.1), paras. 90-99.

18. The real facts of the situation concerning Jews in the Soviet Union were the following. Although Jews represented only 1.1 per cent of the population, they accounted for about 10 per cent of the country's professionals, scientists and artists; in 1961 over 7,000 Jews had been elected as deputies to local organs of authority; they were well represented, too, in the highest organs of Soviet power; they had, and availed themselves of, full opportunities in every sphere of the country's life.

19. In answer to the malicious charges of certain Jewish newspapers in the United States, a number of prominent Jewish citizens of the USSR had written an open letter which appeared in the New York Jewish daily newspaper Freiheit of 6 May 1962. The views stated in that letter certainly carried more weight than the words of those who had a vested interest in attacking the USSR.

20. She believed that the Committee, which had genuinely important problems to consider, should not allow itself to be distracted by those who attacked other countries to ease their own consciences and to intensify the cold war.

21. Mr. ATTLEE (United Kingdom) felt that only through education and mutual understanding could prejudice and intolerance be eliminated. A declaration or convention might have value in that respect, although he believed that it would be very difficult to draft a convention which would be really useful while avoiding the danger of lending a veneer of respectability to those who would suppress the fundamental right of freedom of expression. Nevertheless, he supported the principles and aims underlying the revised draft resolution on the subject and, provided the final version of the text was satisfactory, his delegation would vote for it.

22. He had been interested in the Liberian proposal to have the declaration and convention cover also religious discrimination, which he considered to be potentially as dangerous as racial discrimination. However, work on the subject of religious discrimination was already being done.

23. It was a matter of profound regret to his delegation that religious intolerance existed in the USSR and in other countries of Eastern Europe. He cited various reports from Radio Moscow and Pravda and from the Bulgarian newspaper Rabotnitchesko Delo stating that two children had been taken away from their devout parents, that a church had been closed, that a girl had been expelled from a Communist youth organization because of her religious beliefs and that campaigns against religion were being carried out.

24. In those circumstances it was not surprising that the USSR delegation should oppose the three-Power amendment, which urged the use of education and information media to eradicate prejudice. Clearly, according to Soviet sources, education and media of information in the USSR were employed as weapons against religion, though the constitution guaranteed the right of religious worship. Since the representative of the USSR had stressed that legislation was the only possible way, the original text would be interpreted by the USSR to mean that it was complying with the resolution by legally permitting people to worship, while using education and information media to hamper religious practices. That was precisely the danger his delegation and others sought to avert.

25. Mrs. NIKOLAEVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in her country there was both separation of Church and State and freedom of conscience. She did not think it necessary, therefore, to reply to the United Kingdom representative's attack, which was obviously motivated by a desire to draw attention away from the United Kingdom's own colonialist practices of racial discrimination, practices which many representatives in the Committee had severely condemned.

26. Mr. BAHNEV (Bulgaria) wondered why the United Kingdom representative should be so troubled about a report about religious superstitions in Rabotnitchesko Delo. Surely people had the right to hold atheistic views, and a newspaper the right to report them. The implication of the United Kingdom representative's remarks was that only propaganda favouring religion was admissible.

27. The Orthodox Church in Bulgaria was hardly defenceless. It was protected under the constitution, which provided for the separation of Church and State; it had its own organization and publications, and it had recently elected a Bulgarian patriarch.

28. He supported the proposal to elaborate a convention on the elimination of racial discrimination. He could not, however, support the three-Power amendment, which would limit the measures to be taken to the educational sphere. Legal and administrative measures were essential to root out discriminatory practices.

29. Mrs. DEMBINSKA (Poland) felt that every person in the world had the right to hold agnostic or atheistic views. It was by no means the task of the Committee to foster religion or put pressure on those who chose to have none. Regarding the United Kingdom representative's charge that there was no freedom of religion in Eastern Europe, she could give many examples from her own experience of religious people in Poland who held highly responsible positions and commanded great respect. Moreover, the Government subsidized certain religious activities and ensured the freedom of all to adhere to a religion if they wished.

30. Mrs. TREE (United States of America) inquired of the USSR representative why the Jews in that country had to indicate their religion on their passports while other Soviet citizens were not required to do, and why Jews were not allowed to have their own national organization in the USSR whereas Moslems and Christians were.

31. Mr. OSTROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) remarked that it would be interesting to hear from the United States representative why racism prevailed in her country, so that armed forces had had to be called in to safeguard the rights of negroes during the recent incidents in Mississippi. He also wondered why there were so many fascist organizations in the United States and why people were persecuted for their convictions. The United States representative was on dangerous ground in levelling charges at a country whose consistent policy was to serve the interests of all its citizens. It was quite true that in the Soviet Union there were no associations organized on exclusively nationalistic lines as in the United States; however, there were a number of organizations of a cultural and social nature which people joined because they shared the same interests and convictions. Also, although more than a hundred dif-

ferent nationalities were to be found in the Soviet Union, none was ever discriminated against.

32. Mrs. TREE (United States of America) noted that the USSR representative had not replied to her question about passports.

33. The recent incidents in Mississippi spoke for themselves. Suffice it to recall that the President of the United States, as well as the Press and churchmen in her country, had made it quite clear that the nation was unreservedly opposed to racial segregation and to discrimination on the basis of religion, race, colour, or national origin. The real significance of the Mississippi incidents did not lie in the fact that there were a few individuals or public officials in that State who differed from the views of the majority or defied the laws of the country—for, having a free society, the United States freely admitted its faults and permitted criticism everywhere. What was really significant was the fact that the United States Government had placed its full strength and prestige behind the efforts to protect the rights and liberties of one individual. The State existed to serve the citizen, not the citizen to serve the State. The lengthy discussion that had been devoted to the question in the Committee was proof that the representatives of other countries wished to join in the effort that was being made in the United States to create an open society in which all could live in peace and mutual respect. It was to be hoped that the Mississippi incidents would be seen as another step along the road to the recognition of the dignity of the individual everywhere.

34. Mr. ZULOAGA (Venezuela) endorsed the three-Power amendment to the draft resolution submitted by the Economic and Social Council. The USSR and Ukrainian delegations had argued that the amendment was repetitive of a clause already contained in the draft resolution, but he believed that repetition sometimes made for greater forcefulness. Moreover, the more general position favoured by those delegations was set out in the fourth preambular paragraph of the revised draft resolution calling for a convention, which seemed to have general support in the Committee.

35. Mr. EL FASSI (Morocco) said that Morocco, which had a harmonious multi-racial and multi-religious society, had been at special pains to ensure racial and religious tolerance since it had given hospitality to the victims of various persecutions abroad. The various elements which made up its population were all equal before the law, and enjoyed full freedom regarding their personal status and the practice of their beliefs. Morocco was not only a country in which racial discrimination was non-existent, but it was also a country in which mixed marriages and friendships were very common. Accordingly, his delegation would support any measures proposed by the Committee or the Economic and Social Council for the elimination of racial and religious intolerance. Nevertheless, it believed that there was no need for a convention on the subject, and that a declaration would suffice.

36. Some countries protested indignantly against discrimination but only—it would seem—the better to conceal what was occurring within their own borders. Morocco, representing an Arab African country, felt bound to support all measures designed to safeguard human values since Islamic civilization had a tradition of humanism that was entirely in conformity with

the principles of the Charter. However, the fight against racial discrimination should not be one-sided, and care must be taken to ensure that the victims of past intolerance did not become the racists of the future.

37. Mrs. AFNAN (Iraq) stated that her delegation would vote for the draft resolution of the Economic and Social Council because, in common with other delegations, it was disturbed by the continued existence of racial and religious intolerance in many parts of the world. Iraq joined in condemning such manifestations and firmly believed it to be the duty of the United Nations to seek ways of eliminating them.

38. The draft resolution provided measures that were sufficiently broad to deal with all aspects of the problem. She was pleased to see that, in operative paragraphs 1 and 2, definite distinction was made between the measures that could be applied to religious and national intolerance and those which must be applied to eradicate racial discrimination. The measures provided in operative paragraph 2 against racial discrimination were both positive and effective. As to the measures provided in paragraph 1, while she believed that education would contribute a great deal in doing away with racial and religious intolerance in the long run, she could not regard it as a rapid method nor truly effective by itself. Unless discrimination was prohibited by law and eliminated in practice, children would continue to live in an atmosphere in which discrimination and intolerance thrived, and educators would have an almost impossible task to eradicate it from their minds. Also it should be noted that a great many people were still firm believers in the myth of racial superiority though they were of a high level of education. She also said that we were too apt to forget that racial discrimination practices were rooted in economic interests, or that belief in racial superiority was motivated to maintain those interests.

39. Her delegation preferred the original wording of operative paragraph 3 to that proposal in the three-Power amendment. She doubted if freedom of the Press invariably promoted the elimination of discrimination; indeed, the reverse often occurred. However, she appreciated the fears expressed by many representatives that operative paragraph 3 as it stood might condone the suppression of freedom of information and she would therefore vote for the three-Power amendment. As regards the amendment of Costa Rica and the United Kingdom, she found it hard to see how non-governmental organizations could be expected to submit periodic reports on progress in the field of human rights and who would be responsible for selecting them. Obviously all the non-governmental organizations could not be allowed to send information to the Secretary-General and the latter might be placed in a very difficult position if he were required to discriminate between them. She could therefore not be able to support that amendment.

40. Her delegation was proud to have helped in drafting the revised draft resolution on the elimination of racial discrimination and felt that the original sponsors were to be congratulated on their sincere effort to arrive at a text which would not only be acceptable to the majority, but which might achieve the ultimate aim of eradicating discrimination. Iraq was grateful to all who had exploded the myth of racial superiority and shown the connexion between racism and colonialism and European economic expansionism. Such

concepts as "the white man's burden," and "a mission civilisatrice", which had been used in the past as a cloak for greed and exploitation, were not yet totally discredited. Much had been learnt from the representatives of Latin American countries, which were justly proud of their progress in the elimination of racial discrimination. A valuable contribution had also been made by representatives of the countries

which had once themselves been subjected to racial discrimination and which now recalled that evil only in an effort to propose measures for its eradication. In so doing they had made a profession of faith in the Third Committee and the United Nations in which Iraq whole-heartedly joined.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.