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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Resumed Twenty-sixth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 666TH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 9 December 1976, at 10.15 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. GUEYE (Senegal)

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INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN (agenda item 3) (continued)

(a) DRAFT CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (E/CN.6/591, Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1; E/CN.6/L.699-L.703; E/CN.6/NGO/272 and Add.1) (continued)

Article 21

1. Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) said that her delegation endorsed the Indian delegation's observation that real progress in the implementation of the convention would be achieved by the establishment of national commissions on the status of women. The members of such commissions would not only be dedicated to the advancement of women, but also have experience in women's problems - facts which would improve the possibilities for the implementation of the convention by governments.

2. Non-governmental organizations could provide invaluable support for the national machinery established for the implementation of the convention, and should be called upon for information and recommendations to facilitate progress in the observance of the convention.

3. Her delegation also supported the establishment of a committee on the convention, as provided for in draft article 21 (E/CN.6/591/Add.1). In view of the importance of that article for the eventual implementation of the convention, however, the Commission required more information on the composition and functioning of the committee. To that end, her delegation formally requested that members of the Division of Human Rights who had experience in working with the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination should be invited to explain to the Commission how that Committee functioned, because the Commission on Human Rights was concerned with issues similar to those dealt with by the Commission on the Status of Women. Furthermore, many members of the latter were States parties to the principal human rights conventions and were also members of the monitoring committees for those conventions.

4. Her delegation, which in general supported the establishment of a committee on the convention, considered that article 21 should establish, as a qualification for membership of that committee, experience and expertise in work for the advancement of women. That was the most important qualification; legal expertise was not necessary. It should also be specified that not less than one-half of the members of the committee should be women. A link could be established between the Commission and the committee by providing that the committee should report to the Commission as well as to the General Assembly. A relationship of that nature was preferable to the arrangement provided for in the original text of article 21, under which the Commission would act as the monitoring committee. The Commission had many other responsibilities in a large number of areas of activity and must concern itself with long-term planning relating to problems affecting women.

5. Mrs. TRAPOTE (Cuba) said that, in view of the possible duplication of activities that might arise as a result of the establishment of a committee on the convention, her delegation opposed the Belgian amendment. The Commission itself should be strengthened so as to be able to undertake the task of monitoring the implementation of the convention. Her delegation supported the text of article 21 as contained in document E/CN.6/591 and the amendment proposed by the delegation of Colombia.

6. Mrs. COENE (Belgium), referring to the question of the remuneration of the experts, considered that it would be preferable to adopt a different solution from that suggested in article 21, paragraph 1 (E/CN.6/591/Add.1). One possible solution was proposed by the United Kingdom in document E/CN.6/591, annex I (p.80), and another was provided for in article 35 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Her delegation failed to see why the only committee on a convention aimed at the advancement of women could not be financed in the same way as other committees, namely, by the United Nations.

7. The Iranian representative had expressed doubts concerning the endorsement of a new committee by the Economic and Social Council. In the opinion of her delegation, the Commission should be optimistic on that score. Surely it could not seriously be maintained that a session of a committee consisting of 12 experts would cost more than an additional session of the Commission, with its 32 members. Her delegation agreed that the Commission, as at present constituted, should not add to its already numerous tasks and overloaded agenda the demanding and painstaking work entailed in the examination of a large number of reports. Her delegation was convinced that it was in the interest of the Commission not to be burdened with such a detailed task. Indeed, assignment of that task to the Commission might well paralyse its activities and eventually lead to its abolition. The best course, both from the standpoint of the Commission and the convention alike, would be to choose the solution which had been adopted with regard to other conventions, namely, to establish a standing committee. The approach suggested in the original text of article 21 was not only inadequate but dangerous.

8. Her delegation did not agree that the committee would in any way duplicate the work of the Commission, for their tasks were entirely different. Moreover, as not all the members of the Commission would be parties to the convention, it would be contrary to the principles of the United Nations for the Commission to monitor its implementation. When jurists in her country were called upon to express an opinion on whether the Belgian Government should ratify the convention, they would certainly seize on that point as a fundamental flaw.

9. Her delegation did not understand why the implementation of a convention relating to the status of women should be less important than that of other similar instruments, such as the Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which provided for committees to supervise their implementation. When negotiations had been held on the preparation of those instruments, it had never been suggested that the establishment of a committee to monitor implementation would jeopardize the survival of the Commission on Human Rights. The Commission on the Status of Women, therefore, should not be satisfied with any procedure that was less effective than that established for other instruments.

10. Her delegation favoured the text contained in document E/CN.6/591/Add.1. It was not, however, the author of that text, as several delegations appeared to assume, since it had first been proposed by a working group which had met in January 1974. If that text had not been adopted by consensus at that time, it was certainly not in order to preserve the existence of the Commission - an argument which carried all the more weight today, because at that time the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System had not yet suggested that the Commission should be abolished.

11. Those who opposed the machinery which her delegation had proposed had not yet explained why they did not wish to have an effective system of implementation. If their arguments prevailed, there was a danger that women would again be victims of discrimination, but this time responsibility for that discrimination would lay with women.

12. Miss TYABJI (India), referring to the views expressed by the United States representative, said that her delegation was not in principle opposed to the establishment of the committee, but had doubts concerning its nature. Since at least four years would elapse before the first reports were received and since not more than 20 States were expected to ratify the convention, there was at present no urgent need to establish a committee. It was inadvisable to establish a committee which might later discover that it had no work to do. Problems relating to discrimination against women stemmed not so much from the absence of legislation as from the failure to implement existing legislation.

13. Her delegation wished to propose that the following sentence should be added to the original text of paragraph 1: "In preparing these reports, States Parties are urged to make the fullest use of national commissions on the status of women and women's voluntary organizations, which would be best qualified to report on what is actually happening in the country - as against merely stating the formal legal position".

14. Mr. EHSASSI (Iran) considered that primary responsibility for the supervision of the implementation of the convention should be assumed by national commissions. The establishment of an international group of experts to monitor implementation might discourage States from acceding to the convention. Furthermore, it would be far from easy to secure the Economic and Social Council's approval of the Commission's recommendations concerning the convention. In the opinion of his delegation, there

was no need to establish a group of experts at the present stage. The Commission should adopt a realistic approach by establishing a sub-committee on the implementation of the convention composed of those of its members that were parties to the convention. That sub-committee should meet every two years, two weeks before the regular sessions of the Commission. If it was subsequently found that that procedure was inappropriate, alternative machinery could easily be established.

15. His delegation supported the Indian delegation's proposal concerning the role of national commissions in the preparation of reports. At the same time, the Commission should address recommendations to Governments concerning the establishment of such commissions.

16. Mrs. GONZALEZ de CUADROS (Colombia) said she disagreed with the view expressed by the Belgian representative that the Commission would be unable to undertake a sufficiently thorough analysis of the cases reported to it because of its heavy work programme. It was precisely the Commission which should analyse developments in the implementation of the legal instrument it had devised.

17. Her delegation did not oppose the establishment of an ad hoc committee on implementation; what it found difficult to accept was that the cost of such a committee should be borne by member countries. Such a course would deprive the members of the committee of their freedom to engage in objective analysis. Her delegation could endorse the establishment of a committee on the convention only on the understanding that its members would be paid by the United Nations to serve in a personal capacity. It agreed that national commissions on the status of women and interested non-governmental organizations should participate in the analysis of developments relating to the status of women and of violations of the convention.

18. Serious consideration should be given to the proposals made by the delegations of India and Iran. She assumed that, if the Commission appointed a sub-committee on the convention, the Commission itself would bear ultimate responsibility for analysing violations of the convention. On that understanding, her delegation would be prepared to support the establishment of such a sub-committee.

19. Mrs. ROMANOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that her delegation was unable to support the Belgian delegation's proposal for the establishment of a committee in parallel with the Commission. Such a course would set an inadmissible precedent for duplication, could well undermine the Commission's authority, and eventually lead to its abolition. Many Governments, in their comments on the draft convention, had objected to the establishment of a committee and had expressed the view that it would be more reasonable and efficient to strengthen the Commission. The establishment of yet another committee would represent a completely unjustified expansion of United Nations machinery and dissipation of precious resources. Her delegation endorsed the original text of article 21 and was inclined to support the Indian amendment, which deserved careful consideration.

20. Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that her delegation opposed the proliferation of committees and any action that might undermine the authority of the Commission, which should continue to promote the interests of women throughout the world, and in particular in the developing countries. However, unless the convention was made a legally binding document, it would have no more value than a mere declaration of good intentions. What was needed was an effective legal instrument which could be implemented with the least possible expenditure. Her delegation would favour any compromise solution that met those requirements, and for that reason had no objection to the Iranian delegation's proposal.

21. Mr. LEHMANN (Denmark) endorsed the views expressed by the Belgian representative. His delegation was somewhat puzzled by the apparent unwillingness of some delegations to strengthen the implementation of the convention, since the successful implementation of the convention would have the effect of strengthening the Commission itself.

22. His delegation agreed that implementation of the convention should be monitored at the national as well as the international level. The Commission might accordingly wish to include in the convention a provision that States parties should ensure the full implementation of the convention at the national level. At the international level, the establishment of a committee on the convention would be of great help in ensuring that the rights proclaimed in the convention were in fact being exercised.

23. Princess PURACHATRA (Thailand) said that her delegation supported the suggestion by the delegations of India and Iran to strengthen national commissions or machinery. Many national commissions had already come into being as a result of the International Women's Year, and the Commission should take steps to encourage the establishment of such commissions in countries where they had not yet been created. It would be helpful if the members of such commissions were familiar with the various United Nations conventions, national affairs and the work of the non-governmental organizations. Their reports on the degree of compliance with the convention should be submitted to a regional group, on which members of the Commission from that region might serve in an advisory capacity, before being submitted to the Commission itself.

24. Mr. MAZAUD (Assistant Director, Division of Human Rights) said that various arrangements had been made to ensure implementation of international instruments in the field of human rights. Specifically, four human rights instruments provided for a system of periodic reports by States parties and for the consideration of reports. Two instruments, the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, assigned the task of examining reports submitted by States parties to special bodies set up for that purpose. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights entrusted the Economic and Social Council with responsibility for its implementation and for the examination of reports from States parties, and the Council had recently decided that a sessional working group should undertake that task. The International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid provided that reports submitted by States parties would be considered by a group consisting of three members of the Commission on Human Rights who were also representatives of States parties to the Convention, and that the group was to meet before the opening or after the closure of the Commission's annual session.

25. The committees entrusted with monitoring implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had a number of features in common; they were composed of 18 experts proposed by Governments and elected by the States parties at a special meeting.

26. Referring to the periodicity of the reports submitted by the States parties, he explained that an instrument might contain special provisions to ensure the periodic submission of reports. For instance, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination provided that, after submission of the first report, States parties should report every two years. However, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights contained no such provision; it was up to the organ responsible for implementation to decide when it considered it necessary to receive reports from States parties on all or part of the instrument. In the case of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Economic and Social Council had established a programme which covered a six-year cycle; it had divided the Covenant into three parts, and States parties were required to furnish reports every two years in respect of each part.

27. Mrs. HIRLEMANN (France) requested information on the arrangements for paying the expenses of members of expert committees.

28. Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) said that her delegation would appreciate information about the questionnaires on which the reports submitted by States parties were based.

29. Mr. LEHMANN (Denmark) said that his delegation would like an explanation of the procedure followed by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in examining the reports submitted to it.

30. Mr. HOUSHMAND (Secretary of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Division of Human Rights) said that the implementation machinery for the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination appeared to be very similar to that contemplated in the first alternative text of article 21 of the draft convention. The 18 members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination were elected by the States parties to the Convention for a four-year period, at a meeting of States parties held every other year. The experts served in a personal capacity and their travel and subsistence expenses were borne by the States parties to the Convention; the current arrangement was that 50 per cent of the expenses of the members was divided equally among States parties and the other 50 per cent was apportioned on the basis of the United Nations scale of assessment. The Committee was serviced by the United Nations Secretariat, and expenses connected with the Committee secretariat, such as documentation, staffing and other requirements were met from the United Nations regular budget. On the other hand, the expenses of the new Human Rights Committee which had recently been established under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the expenses incurred by individual experts, would be borne by the United Nations regular budget.

31. Referring to the questions raised by the delegations of Egypt and Denmark, he explained that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had adopted guidelines on the basis of which States parties reported to it every two years. The guidelines were based on the provisions of the Convention and dealt with any legislative, administrative, judicial and other measures which the States parties had taken to give effect to the provisions of the Convention. When the Committee examined a report, the State party in question was invited to send a representative to the Committee to introduce the report and, if necessary, to furnish additional information and reply to questions on the report itself and on the implementation of the Convention. The Committee considered the report and drew attention to any deficiencies in the legislation of the State party which prevented it from complying with its obligations under the Convention.

32. Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) enquired whether there was any way in which a committee entrusted with ensuring implementation of a convention could deal with the problem - common to many countries - of adequate legislation but inadequate implementation of that legislation. Her delegation would also appreciate information about the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

33. Ms. LORANGER (Canada) asked whether the conclusions reached by such a committee on a report were made public.

34. Mrs. HUSSEIN (Egypt) enquired whether the Secretariat responsible for servicing the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination undertook any preliminary analytical work before the Committee met or whether the Committee received its reports direct.

35. Mrs. GONZALEZ de CUADRO (Colombia) said that her delegation would like to know whether the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination achieved practical results. It would also appreciate information on the procedure followed after reports from States parties had been examined.

36. Mrs. BOKOR-SZEGO (Hungary) enquired whether the establishment of a body to monitor implementation would not lead to duplication of work as the draft convention dealt with a number of issues which had been covered in other international instruments. She also wondered whether the establishment of a body to monitor the convention would create problems of competence among the various bodies monitoring conventions.

37. Miss TYABJI (India) asked whether the workload of committees established to monitor implementation of conventions varied considerably, and whether there was a considerable timelag between the framing of a convention and the receipt of the first set of reports.

38. Mr. HOUSHMAND (Secretary of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Division of Human Rights) said that States parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination were required, under its provisions, to report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the implementation of their legislation. While the sources of information available to the Committee under the Convention were limited to the reports submitted by the

States parties, if a State party failed to provide sufficient information on existing legislation and its implementation, the Committee was, of course, entitled to ask for further details. As experts, the members of the Committee might also have knowledge of certain situations not reflected in the reports, and if they were not satisfied that existing legislation was being implemented, they could raise questions or request States parties to provide additional information.

39. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had decided initially that its documents should be restricted, and issued only to the members of the Committee and States parties to the Convention. As the number of States parties had increased, the Committee had decided to make its summary records public but to maintain in restricted form the reports received from States parties. Recently, however, its rules of procedure had been amended to allow the reports of States parties to be made public, if the States parties so requested; a number of Governments had availed themselves of that possibility. There was a tendency among the members of the Committee to amend the rules of procedure further to the effect that, unless a State party specifically requested that its report should be kept restricted, the document would be released for general distribution. Under the rules of procedure of the Committee, the Secretariat did not prepare analytical summaries of reports but submitted all information received directly to the Committee. After considering the reports, the Committee itself reported to the General Assembly on its activities and could make suggestions and general recommendations based on its examination of government reports. The Committee's report to the General Assembly contained a summary of the discussions on each individual report and reflected the views expressed by members, questions put to and answered by the representative of the State party, and a summary of his statement.

40. Mr. MAZAUD (Assistant Director, Division of Human Rights), referring to the practices of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, noted that one member of the Commission had asked whether States parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination whose reports were considered unsatisfactory were subjected to criticism. The answer was in the negative. Under the Convention, the Committee was entitled to call upon States to supply additional relevant information. All information obtained was used as a basis for persuading the States concerned to comply more fully with the provisions of the Convention, rather than for criticism of them. The task of the Committee was not to make specific assessments of States' reports; but general recommendations.

41. The representative of India had asked how soon after a convention came into force the committee established to monitor its implementation became operational. He referred, by way of example, to the case of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That Covenant had entered into force in March 1976 and the members of the Human Rights Committee, which was to monitor its implementation, had been elected at the end of September 1976. The Committee was to meet for the first time in March/April 1977. States parties to the Covenant were supposed to furnish reports to the Committee within one year of the entry into force of the Covenant. It was doubtful, however, whether even if States parties furnished reports in that time, the Committee would be in a position to examine them in depth at its first session. The Committee would require at least one or two sessions to organize its work, draw up its rules of

procedure, determine the conditions in which States were to furnish reports, and so forth. It did not seem unreasonable, therefore, to hold the first session of a committee established to monitor implementation of an international instrument not long after the entry into force of that instrument.

42. Turning to the question put by the United States representative concerning the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, he said that the Sub-Commission was a subsidiary organ of the Commission on Human Rights and was composed of experts acting in their personal capacity. It was elected by the Commission on Human Rights from among persons nominated by Member States, with due regard to the principle of equitable geographical representation. The Sub-Commission met annually. Its agenda was distinct from, but obviously linked to, that of the Commission on Human Rights. It reported to the Commission on Human Rights. Under its terms of reference, the Sub-Commission undertook studies and performed any other tasks that might be entrusted to it by the Economic and Social Council or the Commission on Human Rights. In connexion with its studies, the Sub-Commission frequently appointed special rapporteurs from among its own members. Studies often served as a basis for the preparation of international instruments on the questions dealt with by the Sub-Commission.

43. The Sub-Commission also played an important part in the system for dealing with communications from individuals or bodies complaining of situations revealing a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights. In keeping with a procedure established by the Economic and Social Council, a Working Group had been set up to meet two weeks before the Sub-Commission's sessions to examine communications received by the Secretariat and refer those which seemed to reveal a consistent pattern of gross and reliably attested violations of human rights to the Sub-Commission for attention. The Sub-Commission, in turn, selected from among the communications brought to its attention particular situations which appeared to reveal violations of a kind requiring consideration by the Commission on Human Rights. As soon as a communication was received, the Government concerned was, of course, invited to comment on it. If it deemed it necessary, the Sub-Commission could request the Government to furnish additional explanations. The Commission, in turn, could request the Government to supply further explanations and invite it to attend the meetings - which were always held behind closed doors - at which the communications relating to that Government were discussed. Thus, Governments were afforded every opportunity to comment on communications.

44. Referring to the fear expressed by the Hungarian representative that the committee it was proposed to establish under article 21 of the draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women would duplicate work being done by committees already in existence, he suggested that it would be difficult to find any area of international work in which there was not some risk of overlapping. It could be argued, for example, that as international instruments dealing with a certain spectrum of human rights contained a general article stipulating that those rights must be granted without distinction of any sort on grounds of race, colour, creed or sex, there was no need for special conventions on the elimination of discrimination in those areas. In the matter of legal norms, therefore, too much attention should not be paid to the question of duplication. On the other hand, care should be exercised to ensure that States reporting under a certain instrument were not required to provide information already supplied under

another instrument. Thus, article 17 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stipulated that, where relevant information had previously been furnished to the United Nations or a specialized agency, a precise reference to the information so furnished would suffice. It was up to the bodies established to monitor the implementation of international instruments to take account of the existence of other, possibly more competent, bodies and refer appropriate information to them.

45. Mrs. TALLAWY (Egypt) said that during the discussions in the Commission on the Status of Women fears had been expressed that machinery might be created by which States which were not parties to a convention would nevertheless be able to monitor the situation with respect to implementation of that convention in States parties. She asked how that difficulty was overcome in the case of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

46. Mrs. BOKOR-SZEGO (Hungary) cited the hypothetical case of a State which, although a Party to the future convention on the elimination of discrimination against women and to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, did not grant political rights to women. Would that case be dealt with by the committee it was proposed to set up under article 21 of the draft convention or by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination? With whom would the decision lie?

47. Mrs. HUTAR (United States of America) asked whether the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had succeeded in drawing attention to the importance of implementing the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and in expediting such implementation. Would the Commission on the Status of Women be justified in expecting the committee it was proposed to establish under article 21 of the convention to expedite implementation of the convention on the elimination of discrimination against women?

48. She also asked whether the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had ever dealt with questions of discrimination against women.

49. Mr. HOUSHMAND (Secretary of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Division of Human Rights), replying to the questions put by the representative of the United States of America, said that the emphasis in the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was always on implementation of the International Convention. Implementation was not possible, however, until the legislation of countries had been brought into line with the requirements of the Convention. The first task, therefore, was to adapt legislation, but the Committee's main concern was implementation.

50. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination did not deal with discrimination against women. It derived its jurisdiction from the Convention which, in article 1, defined racial discrimination as meaning "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life". There had been occasions on which Governments had included in their reports references to legislation prohibiting discrimination against women. The Committee, while welcoming the inclusion of such information in the report, did not, however, devote much attention to such references because its mandate was limited to the terms of the Convention.

51. The case of a State which was not a party to a convention monitoring the situation with respect to implementation in a State which was party thereto did not arise in the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which was a committee of experts whose members were nominated and elected by States parties to the Convention. The problem could arise, however, in the case of instruments such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in which responsibility for monitoring implementation lay with the Economic and Social Council. In order to cope with that problem, the Council had decided, at its sixtieth session, that a sessional working group, with appropriate representation of States parties to the Covenant, should be established whenever reports were due to be examined by the Council. Similarly, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid contained a provision stating that a group consisting of three members of the Commission on Human Rights who were also representatives of States parties to the Convention was to be appointed to consider the reports submitted by the States parties.

52. Mr. MAZAUD (Assistant Director, Division of Human Rights) said that the question raised by the representative of Egypt could create problems. For example, at its next session the Commission on Human Rights was to appoint a group of three members who were also States parties to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. It was possible that there would not be three members of the Commission who were also States parties to the Convention. In order to meet such a contingency, provision had been made in the Convention for members to be appointed by other means.

53. Turning to the question raised by the representative of Hungary, he suggested that it was only when a convention had come into effect that it was possible to work out a system for co-ordinating the activities of its control body with those of the control bodies of other international instruments. In any event, those bodies reported directly or indirectly to the General Assembly, which was therefore in a position to exercise a co-ordinating role.

54. Mr. NOTERDAEME (Belgium) suggested that the Commission should concentrate first on drawing up a good convention with a good system for the monitoring of implementing. The question of rationalization would inevitably arise, but it could be dealt with when the convention had come into effect. In the opinion of his Government, it was dangerous, in drafting a legal instrument, to attach excessive importance to matters of rationalization.

55. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Division of Human Rights for the very useful information they had given the Commission.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.