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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5TH MEETING

Chairman: Mrs. SHAHANI (Philippines)

CONTENTS

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 75: DRAFT CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST  
WOMEN (A/C.3/32/L.59)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (continued) (A/C.3/33/L.1 and Add.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN read the draft programme of work\* which she submitted for the Committee's approval, indicating the order of consideration of items, the number of meetings to be allocated to each item and the proposed dates for consideration. The programme in question had been prepared on the basis of suggestions made by representatives concerning the grouping of items and the priority to be assigned to them, bearing in mind that the Committee had at its disposal 77 meetings in all and was authorized to hold a maximum of seven meetings per week, and that it had agreed to conclude its work on Friday, 8 December 1978.
2. Mrs. SEHICHI (Algeria) said that items 86 and 127, concerning human rights, could be considered in conjunction with item 84, which dealt with a related question. In addition, she wished to know the reason why 10 meetings had been allocated to item 88, concerning the United Nations Decade for Women, while 12 had been allocated to items 12, 89 and 90. She saw a certain imbalance in this allocation of meetings, given that the report of the Economic and Social Council (item 12) usually raised questions that demanded the close attention of the Committee. Moreover, those three items would be considered between 8 and 23 November, during which period the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (item 85) was also scheduled to be considered.
3. Miss SHAIKAR (Iran) noted that the programme of work presented by the Chairman took account of the suggestions made in earlier meetings, especially with respect to the grouping of interrelated items. None the less, she shared the concern of the representative of Algeria concerning the number of meetings allocated to items 12, 89 and 90, and noted that it might be necessary to allocate more time to the consideration of the report of the Economic and Social Council. On the other hand, experience had shown that it was often not necessary to devote four meetings to the consideration of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in which case a few more meetings could be devoted to the Report of the Council.
4. She stressed how important it was for the Committee to be provided with all the necessary documentation at the proper time. She hoped, therefore, that the report of the Preparatory Commission for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women would be distributed shortly. With respect to the Draft Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (item 75), only document A/C.3/32/L.59, containing the approved articles, was available; the draft report should therefore be distributed as soon as possible.
5. Mr. AL-HUSSEINI (Syrian Arab Republic) noted that the consideration of certain items which should have received greater priority on the programme of work, had

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\* Subsequently issued as document A/C.3/33/L.2.

(Mr. Al-Hussamy, Syrian Arab Republic)

been deferred. That should not constitute a precedent for the following year, and the Secretariat should strive to distribute in time documents relating to the major items usually considered at the beginning of the session.

6. He considered that the Committee should begin with item 82, concerning the right of peoples to self-determination, since the documents for that item were available. He also thought that there was a slight inconsistency in grouping items 78 and 80 with items 87 and 91, in that the first two related to an essentially economic question, whereas the latter were of a humanitarian nature. In addition, he would have preferred the report of the Economic and Social Council to be examined independently of items 89 and 90, since there were great differences between them.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that the reason why item 84 would have to be considered at the beginning of December was that the report of the Human Rights Committee would not be ready until that date; it was therefore not possible to deal with that item together with items 86 and 127. The documents relating to item 88, that is, the report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women and the report of the Consultative Committee on the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women would be ready in English on Monday, 2 October. The Secretariat was preparing a background document relating to item 75, which would include the full text of the Draft Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and which would also be ready in the first week of October.

8. The fact that items 89 and 90 had been grouped with item 12 (Report of the Economic and Social Council) did not indicate that they formed an integrated whole, although they were undoubtedly related. As to the grouping of items 78 and 80 with items 87 and 91, she considered that, broadly speaking, the four items concerned social development and were interrelated.

9. Mr. ARBOLEYA-CERVERA (Cuba) felt that the grouping of items 78 and 80 with items 87 and 91 was not appropriate, since the first two related to social changes affecting all sectors of the population, whereas the latter two concerned specific matters affecting some sectors only. The number of meetings allocated to items 86 and 127 seemed disproportionate since the first item had already been considered the previous year and required little further consideration, whereas item 127 was new and it was doubtful whether any conclusions on it could be arrived at during the current session. He was in agreement with the number of meetings allocated to items 78 and 80 and 87 and 91, and also to items 82, 84, 76, 73 and 74, which had always constituted a very important part of the Committee's programme of work, but he considered that, in general, there should be a closer correspondence between the number of meetings allocated to each item and the priority assigned to it by the majority of the members of the Committee.

10. Mr. LAMB (Australia) said that, although he would have preferred items 78 and 80 to be considered together with item 12 (Report of the Economic and Social Council), he would not oppose the adoption of the proposed programme.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that the proposed programme was not inflexible but was intended as a guide to the Committee in organizing its work. She suggested that the Committee should adopt the programme on the understanding that it could be amended, where appropriate, and that representatives were completely at liberty to propose any changes they wished. If she heard no objections, she would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the programme of work.

12. The Committee's programme of work was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 75: DRAFT CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (A/C.3/32/L.59)

13. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Committee should consider the question of the organization of the Working Group on the Drafting of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its next meeting.

14. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.