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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 43rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HAMER (Netherlands)

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AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, (continued)
(A/C.3/41/L.39, L.40/Rev.1, L.41, L.42)

1. Mr. CASTELLON (Nicaragua), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, noted that the representative of Honduras had denied the existence of a tripartite commission composed of representatives of the Nicaraguan Government, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Honduran Government. He drew attention, in that regard, to a letter dated 10 July 1986 from the Honduran Minister for Foreign Affairs, Carlos López Contreras, addressed to the Nicaraguan Minister for Foreign Affairs a.i. In that letter, the Honduran Government agreed to the establishment of machinery designed to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Nicaraguans, and named Colonel Abraham García Turcio as the liaison officer who would hold consultations with the liaison officer appointed by the Government of Nicaragua and UNHCR. The first consultations, in which Colonel García Turcio, the Nicaraguan liaison officer and the regional representative of UNHCR, among others, had participated, had been held in San José, Costa Rica. The representative of Honduras, for some unknown reason, seemed unwilling to call that machinery a tripartite commission.

2. As to the Miskito Indians who had entered Honduras in April and to whom the representative of Honduras had also referred, he drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the articles published on that question by The Boston Globe and The Philadelphia Enquirer, as well as by the United States non-governmental organization, "Americas Watch". The journalists who went to Honduras at the time of those events had confirmed that the counter-revolutionary organization Kisan had instilled terror among the Miskitos to make them flee to Honduras. They had also revealed that the manoeuvre had been designed to encourage the adoption by the United States Congress of \$100 million in aid, out of which \$5 million was to be given to the aforementioned counter-revolutionary organization. The reporter for The Philadelphia Enquirer, Eve Steckow, and the reporter for The Boston Globe, Pamela Constable, had both pointed out that the welcome of the Miskitos in Honduras had actually been staged, and that many of them had been told in advance what they should say.

3. He drew attention, with regard to the treatment of the Nicaraguan Miskito Indians in Honduras, to a document prepared by three United States non-governmental organizations, the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, the Washington Office on Latin America and Americas Watch. That document noted that the Miskito refugees in Honduras had been recruited into the forces opposing the Sandinist régime, and that those forces were a serious threat to other Miskitos.

4. Lastly, The New York Times, on 12 November, had reported some remarks made by the Honduran Minister for Foreign Affairs, Carlos López Contreras, who was currently in Guatemala, attending the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS). He was reported to have said that his country did not want to harm anyone and that if there were "contra" camps in Honduran territory, it was without the approval of the Government. It might be wondered, then, which Government had given them its approval.

5. Mr. MAHMOUD KHAN (Pakistan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the remarks made at the meeting the previous day by the representative of Afghanistan were a gross misrepresentation of the facts and represented an attempt at propaganda by the Government, which was trying at all costs to defend the indefensible. The representative of the Kabul régime had dismissed the Afghan refugee problem as a myth. He had not hesitated to characterize as criminals the victims of the atrocities committed by his Government. He had spoken of refugee-producing countries, while his own country qualified for the highest honours in that regard. He had referred to embezzlement of aid and insinuated that considerations of hard currency were the underlying reason for that immense human tragedy. Such ridiculous statements did not even warrant being refuted. Their contradictions and rhetorical phraseology were self-evident testimony of the true nature of that type of propaganda. He drew attention, however, to the thrust of the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/41/778. The report stated that there were over 5 million Afghan refugees, the equivalent of one third of the Afghan population, and showed clearly that the reason for that exodus was the conflict in Afghanistan. Such a large number of refugees, not to mention the economic burden which it placed on the receiving countries, was in itself a human rights problem. Moreover, there was a clear distinction between those refugees and the migrant workers or nomads who moved around on a seasonal basis. Besides, the Kabul representative should not forget that, according to the Secretary-General's report, some 400,000 refugees were still waiting to be registered in the camps. The Secretary-General's report clearly indicated that the Afghan Government, with the assistance of foreign troops, was engaged in an armed conflict with opposition movements, which were supported by the vast majority of the civilian population. Bombing and the use of sophisticated weapons, including anti-personnel mines and booby-trap toys, were causing many casualties among the civilian population. The brutality of that conflict continued to produce a constant flow of refugees, despite amnesty decrees. The report also drew attention to the use of specially trained dogs against children and elderly persons. In January and February, during a massacre which had caused 100 deaths, dogs had been used to attack men.

6. By making false allegations against Pakistan, the representative of the Kabul régime wished to explain away the brutal reality of the situation in his country, although United Nations reports had established the facts without a doubt; in so doing he showed utter disregard for the United Nations and the verdict of the international community.

7. Mr. PASTOR (Honduras), in reply to the representative of Nicaragua, said that, contrary to what the latter had stated, there was no permanent tripartite commission such as that which existed, for example, between the Government of El Salvador and UNHCR, which met periodically in accordance with a well-established procedure. The ad hoc machinery to which the representative of Nicaragua had referred functioned quite differently.

8. With regard to the 8,000 Miskitos who had left Nicaragua the previous April, their very number contradicted the estimates made by Nicaragua, which had announced the previous year to the Third Committee that 5,000 Nicaraguan refugees would return to their country in the following months. In fact, one third of the refugee

(Mr. Pastor, Honduras)

population in Honduras, or more than 8,000 persons, had left Nicaragua during the same period. Instead of drawing the attention of members of the Committee to newspaper articles, he referred to reports by UNHCR, which had been dealing with settling those refugees in Honduras. If the refugees had gone to Honduras against their will and by force, they would have already gone back to their country, and no international agency would have taken care of them.

9. Nicaragua had also reproached Honduras for not allowing the Nicaraguan authorities to tell the Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras about the benefits they would receive if they returned to their country. He wondered why the Nicaraguan Government had not explained those benefits in detail to the Miskito Indians while they were still in their country, so that they would not have been tempted to leave it. Moreover, he was surprised that the Nicaraguan Government was demanding freedom of speech in Honduras while it muzzled the press within its own borders.

10. However, he wished to note his Government's desire for a dialogue, in particular to facilitate the repatriation of Nicaraguan refugees.

11. Mr. NABIEL (Afghanistan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of the Pakistani military régime - a military régime because the so-called elections in Pakistan had changed nothing about the situation in that country - had to be admired, for his statement was a masterpiece of lies and distortions of facts.

12. The representative of Pakistan had referred to the presence of a limited contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. He had tried to ignore the legitimate right of countries to self-defence provided by the United Nations Charter and relevant international instruments. He had tried to justify the unlawful interference of the Pakistani Government and its imperialist patrons in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Finally, he had tried to give humane character to the support provided by the Pakistani Government to the inhumane activities of the counter-revolutionaries. In fact, the Pakistani military rulers, who were stepping up their psychological war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, were using every means to inflate the number of so-called Afghan refugees in Pakistan. They did not hesitate to register the same persons twice or even three times and to register nomads and the local population as refugees. All they wanted to do was to pocket huge sums of foreign currency, and they tried to justify their activities by that self-made myth. According to eyewitness testimony, entire stockpiles of foodstuffs had been embezzled to fill the pockets of Pakistani officials and Afghan counter-revolutionaries, or were being freely sold in the markets of Pakistani cities. In that context, he cited the testimony of a French citizen, who had declared that, in the guise of so-called humanitarian operations, the Pakistanis were funnelling hundreds of millions of dollars into Afghanistan for the continuation and expansion of the war. The Afghan Government was not surprised by the campaign being carried out by the Pakistani military Government, which needed to divert attention from the tense internal situation in Pakistan.

(Mr. Nabel, Afghanistan)

13. As to the number of so-called refugees indicated by the Pakistan authorities, he wished to point out that no international body, not even the United Nations, had ever provided any objective and impartial estimate of their number. As for the so-called bombings, human rights violations and other baseless allegations made by the representative of Pakistan, he would refer to them when the Committee took up the question of human rights.

14. Mr. Mahmoud KHAN (Pakistan), replying to the representative of Afghanistan, said that the vile allegations made against his country by the representative of the Kabul régime were too grotesque to be true. It would suffice, in order to refute them, to point out that one week earlier the General Assembly had once again pronounced itself on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. Besides, the unreserved support which the international community gave to the activities of UNHCR in Pakistan was enough to show that the accusations of the representative of Kabul were totally baseless.

15. Mrs. RODRIGUEZ PEREZ (Cuba), referring to the statement made the day before by the representative of Costa Rica on the question of refugees, said that she believed it necessary to make a clarification concerning the so-called efforts made by the Costa Rican Government to assimilate Cuban refugees. She wished to point out that the persons to which the representative of Costa Rica had referred were in no way regarded as refugees. Refugees were persons who fled oppression in their country, while the Cubans in question had left their country under perfectly legal conditions, supplied with papers issued by the Cuban authorities. UNHCR had never recognized the Cubans referred to by the representative of Costa Rica as refugees.

16. The CHAIRMAN said that the debate on items 99 and 12 on the question of refugees had been concluded.

AGENDA ITEM 94: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

AGENDA ITEM 95: HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

AGENDA ITEM 96: QUESTION OF A CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

AGENDA ITEM 97: INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

(a) REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

(b) STATUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AND THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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AGENDA ITEM 103: TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

17. Mr. HERNDL (Assistant Secretary-General, Centre for Human Rights), introducing items 94, 95, 96, 97, 98 and 103, said that, with respect to item 94, the Commission on Human Rights would take up two reports at its 1987 session. The first, which had just been completed, had been prepared by Mrs. Odio Benito, Special Rapporteur entrusted with undertaking a comprehensive and thorough study of the current dimensions of the forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1987/26), and the second, still being prepared, was the work of Mr. d'Almeida Ribeiro, Special Rapporteur entrusted by the Commission on Human Rights, under its resolution 1986/20, to examine such incidents and actions by Governments inconsistent with the provisions of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief and to recommend remedial measures, including, as appropriate, the promotion of a dialogue between communities of religion or belief and the Governments of their countries.

18. With respect to item 95, he drew attention to several recent decisions of the Commission on Human Rights: at its 1986 session, the Commission had considered ways and means of utilizing the results of scientific and technological developments for the promotion of human rights and had invited the United Nations University to study both the positive and negative impact of developments in that field. It had also requested the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to undertake a study on the use of the achievements of scientific and technological progress to ensure the right to work and development, and to complete its consideration of the question of persons detained on the grounds of mental ill-health so that the Commission could submit a draft body of principles, guidelines and guarantees to the General Assembly. In that connection, he also drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General (A/41/463 and Add.1).

19. With regard to item 96, encouraging progress had been made, thanks to a basic agreement among States, in the elaboration of a convention on the rights of the child, which would soon give a new dimension to the existing system of the promotion of human rights in general.

20. Two reports had been submitted under item 97: the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the International Covenants (A/41/509) and the tenth annual report of the Human Rights Committee (A/41/40). The latter showed the contribution made by the Human Rights Committee to the co-ordination of activities undertaken in accordance with the International Covenants on human rights and showed that the dialogue between the Committee and States parties was expanding, a very promising sign. Concerning publicity of the work of the Human Rights Committee, that body had, in accordance with the wishes of the General Assembly, speeded up the publication of the first set of annual bound volumes of its Yearbook for 1977-1978, which had just appeared, and that of 1979-1980, which was being printed.

21. The Human Rights Committee, once it had been informed of the extent of the Organization's financial crisis, had decided as an economy measure to cancel its

(Mr. Herndl)

October/November 1986 session, to hold its twenty-ninth session at Geneva instead of New York, to have no more than one pre-session working group and to limit the preparation of summary records to two weeks per session. It had, however, emphasized that it was absolutely necessary to continue to hold three annual sessions in order to carry out its mandate effectively.

22. With regard to item 98, under which document A/41/510 was submitted, the Secretary-General had sent a note verbale in which he had invited the 76 States parties to the five United Nations conventions on human rights that had more than two reports overdue to indicate the reasons for their difficulties in complying with their obligations in that regard and to state whether they wished to receive advice and assistance better to fulfil their obligations. He had received only eight replies, which were analysed in part III of the report. The situation had even worsened since the year before, as was shown in part II of the report. It seemed that States were becoming increasingly negligent in submitting their reports. The Secretary-General was therefore striving to assist States to meet their responsibilities in that regard and, to that end, had organized regional training seminars, notably in Barbados in 1985 for the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean, in Senegal for French-speaking African countries and in Bolivia, in 1986. That measure seemed to be effective and economical. Attention should also be given to the measures taken to assist interested countries in overcoming the difficulties, alluded to in part IV of the report. Finally, the Third Committee would have to consider the convening, in 1987, of a second meeting of the Chairmen of supervisory bodies for the implementation of the different United Nations human-rights instruments to study, inter alia, the present report.

23. With respect to item 103, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment had thus far been ratified by nine countries (Argentina, Belize, Egypt, France, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, Senegal and Sweden) and ratification was proceeding in several other countries. If that trend continued, the Convention could enter into force within one year. The Committee also had before it the report on the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, established in 1982, a document which described the projects financed by the Fund and the contributions of States received for the period 15 November 1985 to 1 October 1986 (A/41/706, para. 4). In that connection, additional contributions had been received from France (\$37,593), Luxembourg (\$1,421) and Sweden (\$72,020), while Switzerland and Austria had paid the pledges which they had made, namely, \$92,165 and \$5,000 respectively. He invited States to contribute more to the Fund in order to assist it in carrying out its important humanitarian task.

24. Miss YOUNG (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, noted that as a cost-saving measure a number of reports submitted by special rapporteurs and special representatives of the Commission on Human Rights had not been circulated in full in all official languages and had not been issued in the same number of copies as in the past. She wondered on what basis and by what authority the Secretariat had made that apparently arbitrary decision. No other reports submitted to the Assembly had been treated that way, and she expected that that procedure would not be used again.

25. Mr. HERNDL (Assistant Secretary-General, Centre for Human Rights) said that because of the Organization's financial crisis and the need for economy, it had been decided that some factual documents would be circulated to the missions only in the original language and accompanied by a simple note verbale. If the financial situation improved, there was no reason for that to recur. The decision did not affect the number of copies and if the initial run was insufficient, additional copies would be distributed.

26. Mr. DOWEK (Israel), speaking on item 9^d, drew attention to the fate of Jews in the Soviet Union, who were the victims of a discriminatory and openly anti-Semitic government policy. While the USSR was trying, both abroad and in part of the Soviet press, to deceive by insisting that it respected the provisions of its Constitution and many international instruments relating to religious freedom, it was well known that its practice was quite different.

27. For decades the Soviet press had been waging a so-called anti-Zionist propaganda campaign, but one that was directed in fact against Judaism in general, and specifically against Jews, particularly by making a very blurred distinction between Jews and Zionists. Judaism was depicted as a barbarous religion and the Talmud and the Bible as works preaching racism, hatred and violence. Jews who were interested in their religious heritage were accused of being traitors and enemies of the Soviet régime on the pretext that the Jewish religion taught them to despise their country of origin. While other religions were simply reproached for lack of discernment and scientific spirit, Judaism was depicted as an inevitably corrupt and depraved religion. Jewish religious services were interrupted, the study of Hebrew and the teachings of Jewish law were prohibited, sacred works and objects were confiscated or profaned and Jews were subject to searches, threats, interrogations by the KGB and even to physical violence, not to mention systematic arrests and imprisonment on trumped-up charges. In a word, the Jews were victims of a persecution designed to make them renounce their religion. That discrimination was also practised against the Jewish community in general because it was the only community that was not authorized to organize itself at the national or regional level and to maintain relations with foreign countries. In the USSR, for more than 2.5 million Jews, there were only 60 synagogues and 5 rabbis, which was far below their needs.

28. He therefore challenged the Soviet delegation to affirm that Soviet Jews did indeed enjoy their rights under article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and particularly the freedom to manifest their religion either alone or in community with others and in public or private, in teaching, practice, worship and observance. His delegation knew perfectly well that the USSR would deny in toto everything that had been said concerning Soviet Jews and would present an idyllic image of their situation. A country as great and strong as the Soviet Union should be ashamed of trying so hard to persecute Jews. Contrary to what the Soviet Government might think, any initiative designed to allow Jews to practise their religion would be interpreted by the rest of the world not as a sign of weakness, but as evidence of maturity and greatness.

(Mr. Dowek, Israel)

29. His delegation was not asking for special privileges for the Jews but only an end to the systematic elimination of their cultural and religious heritage and the same rights for them as for other believers. Let them be allowed to live in accordance with their precepts, or let them leave.

30. Mr. AGUILAR (Venezuela), referring to item 94, noted that while the principle of non-discrimination for any reason, and particularly for reasons of race, was enshrined in many United Nations instruments, relatively little had been done so far to combat intolerance and discrimination based on religion or personal belief. It was true that the right to freedom of religion was laid down in article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Yet, not until 25 November 1981 - 15 years after the adoption of the Human Rights Covenants - had the General Assembly, in resolution 36/55, proclaimed the Declaration on 'he Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion c Belief. The problem of intolerance, however, particularly in religious matters, deserved special attention. As recognized in the preamble to the latter Declaration, disregard and infringement of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief had brought, directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to mankind, especially where they served as a means of foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States. Those considerations were quite timely, because there was currently a resurgence of religious intolerance, which had been thought obsolete. It was alarming to note that, in various parts of the world, belonging to a specific religion meant loss of the most elementary rights and liberties, and could even mean loss of life. There was therefore a need to strengthen all the norms applicable in that area and particularly to ensure that existing provisions were applied.

31. In that connection his delegation welcomed the studies on that issue undertaken by the Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. It also felt that the Human Rights Committee was doing useful work in devoting special attention to the implementation of article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights when examining the periodic reports of States parties.

32. Of course it was primarily the duty of the States themselves to combat discrimination based on religion or belief. The States parties to that Covenant were bound, under article 2 thereof, to adopt legislative measures to guarantee respect, *inter alia*, for the right to freedom of religion, and must also ensure to every person the opportunity of appealing to the judicial authorities when that right was violated.

33. One could not stress too strongly the role played in that connection by information and education, including dissemination of the relevant international norms. That work must be carried out not only in academic establishments but also as part of the training of civil servants who, directly or indirectly, had to ensure the protection of human rights and who had special responsibilities in the area of religion.

(Mr. Aguilar, Venezuela)

34. The United Nations too could and must contribute to that task of providing information by disseminating the international human rights norms in various languages and by keeping that question on its agenda.

35. Referring to item 97 concerning the International Covenants on Human Rights, he said he was concerned that the Organization's financial crisis might affect the future work of the Human Rights Committee, of which he was a member. As everyone knew, the third session for 1986 of the Human Rights Committee, which should have taken place from 20 October to 7 November of the current year, had been cancelled for reasons of economy. He hoped that that would not be the case next year and in the following years. To carry out its mandate adequately the Committee must definitely meet three times a year. He drew attention to paragraph 428 of the report of the Human Rights Committee (A/41/40), which noted that the current system of three sessions a year was designed to allow the Committee to examine periodic reports submitted by 83 States parties to the Covenant and to take timely action on complaints submitted by individuals, which were frequently of an urgent nature.

36. His delegation attached great importance to the dissemination of the proceedings of the Human Rights Committee and was pleased that the two volumes of its Yearbook, for the years 1977-1978, had already been published in French and would soon be published in English. The volumes for the years 1979-1980 were also in preparation. He hoped that publication would continue without interruption.

37. Referring to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, he said he was pleased at the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council to establish a committee of experts elected in their personal capacity to monitor the implementation of its provisions.

38. On the other hand, the slackening number of accessions to those important international instruments was regrettable. He called upon those States which had not yet done so to accede to, or ratify, those instruments as soon as possible. Barely more than half of the Member States of the Organization were parties to the Conventions, and fewer than one fourth to the Optional Protocol. The technical assistance programmes to facilitate ratification of the Covenants, and to assist States who were parties in fulfilling their obligations thereunder, would be useful in that connection. Those programmes must be continued. Neither should it be forgotten that presentation of periodic reports on the implementation of the provisions of the Covenants and other human rights instruments was a fundamental obligation of the States parties. In 1986, Venezuela had presented two reports, one under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the other on the implementation of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

39. Finally, Venezuela had signed, and was preparing to ratify, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

40. Mr. FRAMBACH (German Democratic Republic), referring to agenda item 95, stressed that scientific and technological developments had wide-ranging implications for human rights in all spheres of life. The Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind, adopted by the General Assembly in 1975, provided specific guidelines for the Organization's activities in the field. The principal task, therefore, lay in fully applying its provisions. It was incumbent upon all States to place scientific and technological progress in the service of social progress, which was not necessarily the case, as scientific and technological discoveries could have both positive and negative uses. The imperialist arms race, for example, constituted an attack against all human rights. Therefore, the German Democratic Republic believed that questions relating to the right to life and the safeguard of peace had the highest priority in considering that agenda item.

41. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the draft resolution on that question stressed the relationship between steps to bring about disarmament, and steps designed to promote and ensure human rights. If certain States took a negative attitude on that point, the German Democratic Republic believed, on the contrary, that the dangers of the nuclear arms race must not be minimized when the survival of mankind was at stake.

42. In the modern world, economic and social developments were inconceivable without advances in science and technology. That interdependence argued for the establishment of a new international economic order, with emphasis on the access of developing countries to progress. In that connection, the socialist countries' repeated proposal to use, toward that end, the resources released through disarmament measures, would be a genuine contribution towards ensuring and promoting human rights. The United Nations should consider concrete action in its efforts to accomplish the complex, interdependent tasks represented by the struggle for disarmament, and by the realization of the right to development.

43. The German Democratic Republic welcomed the substantial progress made at the forty-second session of the Commission on Human Rights in the elaboration of new draft articles for the convention on the rights of the child. Such constructive work was a reflection of the growing interest in the comprehensive codification of the rights of the child. The Convention would fill a gap in the system of international human rights instruments by protecting particularly vulnerable groups of the world population. As a co-sponsor of the draft resolution on that question, the German Democratic Republic appealed to all delegations to take a constructive approach that would make it possible to complete the task of codification at the forty-third session of the Commission on Human Rights.

44. Mrs. DARGEL (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), referring to agenda item 56, said that the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic unconditionally supported the convention on the rights of the child proposed by Poland. She noted with satisfaction that the initiative had been taken by the representatives of a socialist country. That hardly came as a surprise, for in all socialist countries, the well-being of children was a concern of the State.

(Mrs. Dargel, Byelorussian SSR)

45. Almost all the articles of the Constitution of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic had some bearing on the protection of children's rights, thereby contributing to the establishment of a favourable environment in their first years of life. For children, there were a great many opportunities for recreation and a vast network of schools at which instruction was free. In the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, every attempt was made to establish a link between general instruction and professional instruction in order to facilitate the students' transition into professional life. Moreover, great importance was attached to developing the ideological, spiritual and moral aspects of the personality. Children's libraries had more and more books, and were increasing in number, with each passing year. More and more children's films were also being produced.

46. The Soviet school system instilled in its children an objective appreciation of every people's contribution to world science and culture, and of mankind's struggle for social progress. Apologetics for war and incitement to hatred against other peoples were not countenanced nor were any disparaging remarks about other nations or nationalities. Every Byelorussian school had an international club which sought to establish contacts with children of foreign countries and other republics.

47. The State was particularly concerned with the health of children. Through a vast network of clinics, an effective preventive policy had been implemented, with the result that many childhood diseases had been wiped out entirely. Almost one third of the places in sanatoriums were reserved for children and, in many cases, they could be treated without having to leave their parents.

48. The adoption of a convention on the rights of the child meant that those rights would be embodied in an international legal instrument. The principles stated in the proposed draft convention were consistent with the principles of the other international instruments adopted by the United Nations on the question. The provisions of the draft convention - for which the machinery of implementation had already been devised - were concrete in nature, and designed to accord the child specific rights in all circumstances. Moreover, their field of application had been specifically defined: the provisions must apply to all children, without exception. There had been varying interpretations of the term "child", depending upon the country. The fact that no concrete definition of the term had been proposed in the draft convention would make it more universally acceptable, irrespective of particular local characteristics, customs and laws. The rights set forth must be recognized for all children, without discrimination.

49. The Byelorussian delegation had taken an active part in the elaboration of the draft convention. Existing international instruments in that area, particularly the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, were far from being implemented in every region of the world. In fact, the exploitation of child labour was widely practised in the Western countries. Therefore, the adoption of a convention on the rights of the child would be a concrete indication of a genuine will to improve the lot of the child in every part of the world, and would guarantee not only children's rights but also human rights.

AGENDA ITEM 100: INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST TRAFFIC IN DRUGS: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

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

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.17/Rev.2

50. Mr. ALBAN-HOLGUIN (Colombia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of its sponsors, who had been joined by Senegal and Sri Lanka, indicated that the use of narcotic drugs had increased so much that it was threatening the physical well-being of peoples and could undermine the very foundations of societies. The current discussion reflected the urgent appeal made by the international community on the question, and all Member States had responded to it with the elaboration of the draft resolution in question. The draft resolution recognized the importance of the efforts that had been made for the satisfactory organization of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and recommended that the final steps to ensure its success should be taken with the participation of all concerned parties. He drew the attention of the international community to the second and final session of the Preparatory Body of the Conference which would meet in February 1987 immediately following the thirty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at which all States, all United Nations organs and organizations, as well as competent intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations would contribute to the final drafting of the comprehensive multidisciplinary outline of future activities which, the Colombian delegation hoped would be adopted by the International Conference.

51. Mr. JAAFAR (Malaysia) said he was particularly gratified that draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.17/Rev.2 had been sponsored by 53 Member States. That confirmed the importance which the international community attached to the Conference and showed that everything was being done everything to ensure its success.

52. The preparations being made by States and by United Nations organs and organizations, particularly the Secretariat of the Conference, and by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, gave grounds for optimism about the adoption of concise and practicable decisions on all matters pertaining to action to combat drug trafficking. For countries whose security was threatened by the activities of international drug traffickers, the Conference was a starting-point for co-operative action against that scourge.

53. The Malaysian delegation hoped that the draft resolution, which was the result of intensive consultations among all interested countries, would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.43

54. Mrs. PULILO-SANTANA (Venezuela) introduced the draft resolution concerning the preparation of a draft convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances on behalf of the sponsors which had been joined by Chile, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines and Rwanda. It was the result of in-depth consultations.

(Mrs. Pulido-Santana, Venezuela)

Many of the sponsors would have preferred to keep an operative paragraph to the effect that the preparation of the draft convention should be expedited so that it could be submitted to the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking to be held in June 1987 in Vienna. That idea had finally been abandoned so as not to restrict the time needed for the preparation of the draft convention. The Venezuelan delegation drew attention to the first operative paragraph which expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General for having prepared a preliminary draft of a convention, and to paragraph 3, in which the Commission on Narcotic Drugs was requested to continue its work on the preparation of the draft convention. She also pointed out two corrections to be made to the text of the draft resolution. In the third line of operative paragraph 4, in the Spanish version, the word "concertación" should read "preparación" and, in the French version, the term "mise au point" should be replaced by the word "préparation", in conformity with the wording of the title of the draft resolution. In the fifth line of operative paragraph 5, in the Spanish version, the words "a ella" should be replaced by "a estos instrumentos".

55. Convinced of the need to eradicate the scourge of illicit drug trafficking, the Venezuelan delegation, speaking on behalf of the sponsors, invited Member States to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.45

56. Mr. ALBAN-HOLGUIN (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, joined by Costa Rica, Cuba and Senegal, introduced the draft resolution entitled "International campaign against traffic in drugs" which had given rise to in-depth negotiations. He drew attention to its main objectives, which were to condemn unequivocally drug trafficking in all its forms, to make the international community more aware of the responsibility of all in dealing with the problem and to encourage bilateral and multilateral initiatives to solve it. The Andean countries would have liked to introduce a draft resolution encompassing all initiatives taken within the United Nations to combat the drug problem. Unfortunately, that proposal had not been endorsed by all delegations. Wishing above all to reach a consensus, the Andean countries had agreed to present a text which, though not exhaustive, covered the main aspects of the campaign against traffic in drugs. The draft resolution, among other things, took note of the recommendations of the first Interregional Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to consider those recommendations, requested the Secretary-General to provide advisory services and stressed the importance of integrated rural development programmes as a way of eliminating surplus and/or illegal crops, and called upon countries to contribute or increase their contributions to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 101: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES AND WAYS AND MEANS WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.39

57. Mrs. MUKHERJEE (India), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.39 on behalf of the sponsors, said that, without appropriate national mechanisms, all international efforts to promote human rights would be in vain. The draft resolution was based on previous General Assembly resolutions on the subject. The main provision was paragraph 8, the purpose of which was to foster exchanges of experience among Member States on the establishment and strengthening of national and local institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights. She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.40/Rev.1

58. Mr. QUINN (Australia), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.40/Rev.1, whose sponsors now included the Philippines, said that knowledge of human rights was the cornerstone for their protection and promotion. The draft resolution was based on General Assembly resolution 40/125 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1896/54 both of which had been adopted by consensus. Its purpose was to draw the attention of the international community to the importance of information activities in the field of human rights and to enhance the cost-effectiveness of such activities. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would attract consensus support.

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

59. Mrs. RODRIGUEZ PEREZ (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.41 entitled "Alternative approaches and ways and means within the United Nations system for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms". The draft resolution was part of developing countries' efforts to include the right to development among the basic rights of peoples and individuals. The draft resolution reiterated the ideas already expressed in previous draft resolutions on the subject. She drew attention to three new elements, namely the sixth preambular paragraph, which mentioned Commission on Human Rights resolution 1985/43 of 14 March 1985 in which the Commission expressed its concern "at the deterioration in the conditions of life in some regions of the world", the twelfth preambular paragraph, which referred to Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/56, and the twenty-second preambular paragraph which referred to the need for the developed countries to provide systematic and appropriate financial assistance to the developing countries and to adopt just, equitable economic and commercial policies towards them.

60. Although the draft resolution fell within the scope of the discussion on the draft Declaration on the Right to Development, she believed that there was every justification for the draft resolution, even if the Declaration were adopted.

Draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.42

61. Mr. STIRLING (United States of America), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/41/L.42, said that its object was the protection of the right to property enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many other human rights instruments. The American people and Government were deeply convinced that the protection of that right enabled individuals to show initiative, creativity and imagination in pursuing the personal and collective aims of economic and social development. The purpose of the draft resolution was therefore to focus international attention more closely on the right to property, respect for which could further the exercise of other basic human rights.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.