

the Council held the first such meeting in its history at the time of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary celebrations. This Assembly welcomed the Council's intention to hold further periodic meetings, but none has taken place.

I propose that the Security Council should begin meeting regularly at Ministerial level. Fifteen Ministers meeting together could give a new sense of life and political purpose to the Council. Instead of following a formal agenda, they could have a free discussion of major issues of international peace and security, based on a special report by the Secretary-General. The meetings should be held in an informal atmosphere, without a small army of advisors, thus allowing the Ministers to exchange views informally. Meetings at Ministerial level should be held once or twice a year rather than once every twenty-five years. The first meeting might well be devoted to finding ways to make the work of the Council more relevant to the major issues of peace and security.

ECOSOC

When I spoke here last year, I suggested that the Economic and Social Council should be given a more significant role. At its spring and summer sessions, the Council considers a bewildering variety of issues. It has even less success in what should be its central task - setting priorities and coordinating the work of this family of organizations in the economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related fields. My delegation believes the Council should have more frequent and shorter sessions. At each of these it could deal thoroughly with one group of subjects, covering all of its agenda over a two-year period. From time to time the Council should also meet at Ministerial level to review major economic or social questions when policy considerations justify participation at this level. In all U.N. organs, I welcome new practices of informal consultation and negotiations through contact groups which help to turn the U.N. from a deliberative body into a real negotiating forum.

Specialized Agencies

We must also work for an improvement in the work of the specialized agencies. Many of these have a distinguished record. But our method for controlling the system as a whole has been unsatisfactory. We have been good at devising new programmes, but less so at identifying ones which are obsolete or at preventing duplication. One result has been an escalation of costs. A few years ago one of my predecessors complained to the Assembly that the assessed budgets of the U.N. family of organizations had doubled in ten years. Now they have more than doubled in five. We shall have to ensure that budgets are kept down, and that money is spent only on subjects that have the highest priority.

A second problem with the specialized agencies has been the extent to which they have been turned from their main purposes to deal with the political issues which are the responsibility of this Assembly. Canada is determined to resist this process. We have been particularly concerned about the