

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

**TWELFTH SESSION**

*Official Records*



**SECOND COMMITTEE 485th  
MEETING**

*Friday, 8 November 1957,  
at 3.15 p.m.*

**NEW YORK**

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**Chairman: Mr. Jiří NOSEK (Czechoslovakia).**

**AGENDA ITEM 29**

**Programmes of technical assistance:**

**(a) Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/3613, A/3661, A/C.2/196) (continued)**

**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mr. SZITA (Hungary) noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in recent years in the field of technical assistance. It was encouraging that the African and Asian countries were taking a larger share in the programmes and that an increased proportion of technical assistance was being devoted to industrial development. Moreover, it had been possible, in spite of the extension of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, to reduce the percentage of funds allocated to administrative expenses.

2. With regard to the Technical Assistance Board (TAB) decision to cut down the programmes for some countries and to follow a policy of geographic concentration (E/TAC/65), his delegation fully agreed that priority should be given to helping countries that had recently gained their independence; nevertheless it considered that requests for technical assistance should be judged in the light of real needs rather than on a geographic basis. In any case, no country should be excluded automatically from receiving technical assistance.

3. It was becoming increasingly clear that the industrial countries were not the only ones which were giving help under the programme to the technically under-developed countries. In 1956, for example, 25 per cent of the experts were from such countries as Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Greece and India, which themselves received technical assistance. As the representative of Mexico had observed at the last session of the Technical Assistance Committee (TAC), there was no country so under-developed that it had nothing to offer, and no country so highly industrialized that it could not profit by the experience of others. In that field it was essential not to confuse economic aid with technical assistance proper.

4. The question of the maximum utilization of resources would repay study by TAB. The Board should not only analyse the reasons why considerable funds were left unused, but also take steps to ensure that all the available resources were effectively used in the future. He was surprised that the funds contributed

by the German Democratic Republic, Bulgaria and Hungary itself had not been used, although the Committee had been informed that the requests received were far in excess of the financial resources of the Programme and that the convertibility of certain currencies was apparently not an insuperable obstacle. Although Hungary could not offer technical assistance on the same scale as the great Powers, Hungarian experts could nevertheless furnish valuable help in certain industrial fields (electricity, metallurgy, telecommunications, railway equipment, Diesel engines, pharmaceutical products and foodstuffs) as well as in various branches of geology, agriculture and medicine.

5. Member States should be informed from time to time what resources were available in fields where some requests had not been met. Similarly, if a recipient country asked for assistance in a field in which no help had been offered, the contributing countries should be informed so that they could consider whether the request might not be met as far as the available funds allowed.

6. It had been pointed out that in many cases the recipient country had not been able to create the conditions which would enable it to take full advantage of technical assistance. He considered that experts sent to such countries should be provided with all the necessary equipment—a plan which would be perfectly feasible since it had been announced that a much greater proportion of the Programme's resources could be spent on equipment.

7. He hoped that in spite of the proposed reductions improved methods and a better utilization of available resources would make it possible for the development of the Programme to continue.

8. Mr. O'BEIRNE (Ireland) said that although Ireland's contribution to the Expanded Programme was modest and the aid it received inconsiderable, his country took a deep interest in the work of TAB and TAA, because that work represented the practical application of the principles of the Charter and helped to maintain political stability and to establish social harmony in many areas of the world. He had been particularly glad to hear from the Executive Chairman of TAB (471st meeting) that the expansion of the Programme had been accompanied by an improvement in the quality of the services furnished, a trend that would inevitably be strengthened in the future through the services of experts and the vocational training facilities now available to the Programme on an international level. It appeared that the administrators of the Expanded Programme had obtained results in seven years that far exceeded what had been hoped for at the time when the Programme was established.

9. The assistance offered to Governments with regard to public administration was certainly one of the most useful kinds of help. His delegation was accordingly

pleased to learn that additional funds had been allocated to that work, that two distinguished public-administration experts were working with the Technical Assistance Administration (TAA) and that a working group had undertaken a systematic analysis of that form of technical assistance.

10. The Executive Chairman of TAB and the Director-General of TAA had pointed out that the most serious problem now was how to continue the expansion of the technical assistance programmes if there was no increase in funds. Since it was difficult for some Governments, and impossible for others, including the Government of Ireland, to increase their contributions at present, the attempt must be made to solve the problem by other means, and some had already been employed successfully. It would be possible, for instance, to make wider use of the system known as the "Burma Plan", and to co-ordinate the work of the Expanded Programme with the operations of other economic aid programmes, so as to avoid overlapping, duplication and waste. It was reassuring to know that the authorities responsible for the Colombo Plan and the organizers of certain bilateral programmes of technical assistance, especially the United States programme, were working more and more closely with TAA.

11. It was a matter for satisfaction that TAA had benefited by the co-operation and financial support of several non-governmental organizations, and he hoped that that fruitful collaboration would continue. It would also be useful to examine the possibility of combining technical assistance programmes with programmes of capital investment undertaken by international financial institutions.

12. At the 481st meeting the representative of the United States had spoken of the need to offer the under-developed countries "technical assistance in depth", and of the possibility of expanding the scope of United Nations technical assistance into areas where greater contributions to economic development could be made. Such suggestions, which were a further example of the characteristic generosity of the great American people, would make it possible to give fresh impetus to technical assistance.

13. Mr. THAKUR (Nepal) congratulated the Executive Chairman of TAB and the Director-General of TAA, whose statements had revealed the excellence of the work of the United Nations technical assistance programmes and the devotion of all those engaged in administering them. The United Nations could be proud of having set up international machinery for technical assistance with the participation of more than 100 States and territories and of having secured the co-operation of a large number of inter-governmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations. However, it could not be denied that the volume of assistance was small compared with the urgent needs of the under-developed countries, and that every effort should be made further to expand an operation which not only imparted technical skills to people throughout the world, but strengthened the links between nations, large and small.

14. Nepal was a small country confronted with tremendous problems, for it was economically and industrially under-developed. Conscious of the responsibilities devolving upon it as a Member of the United Nations, it was determined to spare no effort to obtain

the economic and social infrastructure which it so sorely needed. Experts of the technical assistance programme were surveying the mountain chains of Nepal, which were believed to abound in mineral resources. Other experts would assist in the setting up of a centre at Katmandu for the training of administrative personnel. Schools for training health assistants, nurses and health specialists had already been opened as part of the malaria control programme. In some parts of the country malaria had once afflicted up to 30 per cent of the population, but it had now almost been eradicated, thanks to the efforts of the World Health Organization (WHO).

15. In those circumstances, the Committee would understand why his country attached so much value to the United Nations technical assistance programme. Such assistance was of particular importance to a small isolated country that wished to obtain the benefits of modern progress without becoming involved in the struggle for power that was raging in the world; he therefore appealed to the great Powers to finance the United Nations technical assistance programme generously.

16. Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) reminded the Committee that at the Eighth Technical Assistance Conference his country had pledged 200,000 roubles, which brought its total contribution to the United Nations Technical Assistance Fund to one million roubles, or approximately \$250,000. Those figures indicated his Government's interest in that form of international co-operation and its conviction that technical assistance, granted in accordance with the principles laid down in Economic and Social Council resolution 222 (IX), would enable the under-developed countries to develop their economy and become industrialized by making the maximum use of their own resources.

17. Two things were necessary to ensure that the technical assistance programmes were as broad and effective as possible: firstly, steps must be taken to increase the financial resources available and, secondly, existing resources must be used more rationally. With regard to the first consideration, all States had undertaken either to maintain or to raise the level of their contribution and the number of contributors was constantly increasing. It was most regrettable, however, that the offer of the German Democratic Republic had not yet been accepted; the German Democratic Republic had made remarkable economic progress and was in a position to render valuable technical assistance to the under-developed countries.

18. With regard to the use of existing resources, he emphasized that the proportion of administrative and other indirect costs was still too high. Between 1950 and 1956 more than \$25 million had been spent on non-productive aspects of the programme. The situation would be still worse in 1957 as a result of the staff salary increase. His delegation had opposed that increase in the Fifth Committee at the eleventh session, considering it excessive; now that the increase had been granted, it could only hope that the technical assistance administrators would redouble their efforts and do everything within their power to bring about a further reduction in administrative costs. To that end it might perhaps be advisable to review the system of resident representatives. The Executive Chairman of TAB had explained that the resident representatives'

main function was to co-ordinate the economic development activities carried out under the various programmes. In fact, such co-ordination should really be undertaken by the Governments themselves, as the Economic and Social Council had recognized in resolution 659 A (XXIV). The United Nations should be particularly prudent; it should not, for instance, co-ordinate its activities with the bilateral programmes established by certain Western Powers, which were certainly not designed to develop the peaceful sectors of the economy of the under-developed countries.

19. Another means of ensuring that more rational use was made of existing resources was to draw on a greater number of countries for experts and vocational training. It was noteworthy that out of a total of 2,895 international experts recruited in 1956, the USSR had provided only sixteen experts under the Expanded Programme and one under the ordinary programme. At the eleventh session of the General Assembly the Director-General of TAA had assured the Committee (397th meeting) that he would try to remedy that anomalous situation. Nothing had so far been done. He hoped that steps would be taken without delay.

20. During the general discussion on the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/3613), his delegation had given a detailed account of the economic achievements of the Byelorussian SSR (461st meeting). His country was in a position to furnish technical assistance to under-developed countries in many fields, in

which it had acquired great experience: he mentioned as examples the draining of marshes, peat production, forestry, the timber industry, the construction of housing and town planning. It was also prepared to supply high-quality equipment to the under-developed countries and to admit to its territory nationals from the under-developed countries so that they could receive theoretical and practical training and specialize in whatever branch of industry they chose.

21. His delegation was convinced that many of the problems confronting the organs responsible for administering the United Nations technical assistance programmes would be solved more easily if those organs could count permanently on the assistance of experts from socialist countries. It also felt that assistance should be given as a matter of priority to countries which had recently attained their independence and to the Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories; every effort should be made to meet their needs before assistance was given to countries which were economically more advanced.

22. In conclusion, he wished the United Nations technical assistance activities every success and noted with satisfaction that the problem of using national currencies had been solved; in that way an artificial barrier to the effective use of all existing resources had finally been removed.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.