



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Annex IV

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ECWA/11/Rev.1
2 September 1974

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

First Special Session
Beirut, 9-10 September 1974
Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda

SITE OF THE HEADQUARTERS
OF THE COMMISSION

Facilities required in connexion with the location of
the secretariat of the Economic Commission for
Western Asia

Report of the Executive Secretary

1. The present report has been prepared in response to the requests made at the first regular session of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, held in Beirut 3-8 June 1974. The question of the site of the headquarters of the Commission had been included in the provisional agenda of that session. The Commission decided that the matter should be deferred until a special session which would be held in Beirut during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Several delegations requested that the Executive Secretary circulate a report on the facilities which would be required in connexion with the location of the secretariat of the Commission.

2. The Executive Secretary is aware that the facilities required for the United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) will depend not only on the nature of its activities but also on the scope of its work and the level of resources which will be available to the new Commission. The work programme approved by ECWA at its first session covers the year 1975 only and provides a somewhat restricted basis for estimating the facilities required in connexion

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with the location of the organization. Pending the approval of ECWA's 1976-77 Programme Budget and 1976-79 Medium Term Plan, it is not possible to provide more than a tentative indication of what such requirements might be, on the basis of certain assumptions, and the precedents of the other regional economic commissions. Therefore, the estimates that follow should be considered subject to considerable revision, in the light of experience and subsequent action by various legislative organs of the United Nations.

Conference and meeting facilities

3. The Commission will normally hold one regular session a year. In addition, the Commission may establish such subsidiary organs on a permanent or ad hoc basis as may be necessary for the effective discharge of its functions, including, as required, expert groups to consider specific problems and to make recommendations.

4. Furthermore, in the normal development of its activities the organization may convene a number of workshops, technical meetings, seminars, consultations and other meetings directly related to its programme of work.

5. Thus, as regards conference facilities, the requirements may be tentatively summarized as follows:

	<u>Approximate Capacity</u> <u>(number of seats)</u>
One large conference hall to accommodate sessions of the Commission (membership including advisors & observers of Member States; representatives of specialized agencies, inter-governmental organizations & non-governmental organizations; press and public).	250-300
Two medium-sized conference rooms to accommodate meetings of committees, working groups, etc.	50-60

6. The above-mentioned conference rooms would need to be equipped with appropriate facilities for simultaneous interpretation and sound recording. Flexible seating arrangements which could be adjusted to accommodate requirements as they arise, would also have to be anticipated.

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7. In connexion with conference and meeting facilities, there is normally a need for office space for the management of the meetings and for the chairman and staff of committees. The requirements in this respect would vary somewhat, depending on whether the conference area would either form part of the secretariat building or be located in an adjoining building. It may be assumed that some six offices would be needed of an average size of some 15 square metres each, i.e. a total of 120 square metres net.

8. Other space facilities and equipment required in the conference area would include: distribution of documents; information desk; press facilities; delegates lounge and dining room; public lobby facilities and press, radio and television; cable and postal services; other miscellaneous and auxiliary services; parking facilities.

Auxiliary Services

9. Space will also be required for auxiliary services and activities. In the established United Nations and specialized agencies headquarters such facilities include documents reproduction services, archives, registry and mail room, library facilities, telecommunications and post office, security services, messengers, travel unit, restaurants and kitchen facilities, general storage space, maintenance and custodial shops and locker rooms, provision for tours and exhibits, and the sale of U.N. stamps and publications. Space would be required for staff support services such as medical service, language training, cafeteria, lounge and recreation area, co-operative and banking facilities. These are normally termed common services areas as they serve all the occupants of the building. It is estimated that approximately 8,000 square metres would be required for these purposes.

Office Space

10. In connexion with his examination of the administrative and financial implications in regard to the 1975 work programme of ECWA, the Executive Secretary has developed estimates concerning the overall future staff requirements of ECWA on the basis of certain assumptions regarding the structure and functions of the Commission.

11. The Executive Secretary has tentatively estimated that ECWA would require 117 Professional posts and 146 General Service staff in the 1978-79 biennium, a total of 263 regular budget posts. Assuming a normal staff growth in the

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following two biennia and taking into account the sizes of other regional economic commissions, a growth on the order of 20 per cent could be projected for the four-year period. On this basis, accommodation would then be required for approximately 320 staff financed from the regular budget. For planning purposes, it may be assumed that approximately 25 per cent or 80 additional posts would be financed from extra-budgetary sources such as UNIDO, UNFPA and other agencies, as well as voluntary funds. On this basis, total staff might increase to approximately 400 during the period 1980-83.

12. From the above figures, the overall office space requirements of ECWA may be estimated on the basis of current construction planning of office buildings for international organizations where a desirable net office space average of approximately 12 square metres per person is normally used. Thus the net office space requirements for approximately 400 ECWA staff could be put at 4,800 square metres. This figure would represent net usable space. It does not include space for special uses, corridors, halls, stairs, wash rooms and space needed for mechanical maintenance purposes, and must be increased by appropriate factors to allow for these items.

13. In the past, actual requirements have quite frequently outrun earlier estimates of office space requirements, in part because of the time that normally elapses between planning and occupancy. In previous negotiations between host governments and the Secretary-General concerning the construction of United Nations common buildings to accommodate the offices of the United Nations and specialized agencies in a particular city, a 50 per cent provision for office space expansion has been added to the net estimated space requirements as of the date of occupancy. This factor is useful in avoiding the possibility that accommodations might already be insufficient by the time they are ready for occupancy, and also provides a reasonable amount of office space reserved for future expansion. If a similar provision were added to the figure given in paragraph 12 above, the net usable office space required for ECWA would be increased to some 7,200 square metres for planning purposes.

14. As indicated in paragraph 12, the figure for net usable space must be increased to allow for various items. The United Nations has found that approximately 15 per cent additional is required for special use requirements

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within the office areas. These include such special uses as file rooms, reference units, small conference rooms, office supplies and storage, etc. An additional 5 per cent is normally required for circulation space such as halls and corridors.

15. The requirements for building service areas such as machine rooms, elevators, stairs, toilets, service closets, lobbies, etc. are estimated at 33 per cent of total usable area.

16. On this basis, the total building area to accommodate the requirements of ECWA would be approximately 23,579 square metres. The estimated total space requirements are summarized below:

<u>Conference Area and Auxiliary Services</u>	<u>Estimated Required Area in square metres</u>
Main conference room	500
2 small meeting rooms at 60 m ² each	120
Delegates lounge	250
Office space for committee chairman, etc	120
Auxiliary Services area	<u>8,000</u>
	8,990
 <u>Office Space Requirements</u>	
ECWA office space	7,200
Special use area at 15%	<u>1,080</u>
	8,280
Circulation space at 5%	<u>414</u>
	8,694
	17,684
	<u>5,895</u>
Building service areas at 33%	
EST. TOTAL BUILDING AREA FOR ECWA REQUIREMENTS	23,579 m ²

Other United Nations Offices

17. Members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee have often indicated their preference for including the offices of the specialized agencies and other U.N. offices in the establishment of any new headquarters.^{1/} In addition to those offices already in existence in any particular location, it may be expected that the establishment of the

^{1/} e.g. in the instance of UNEP. A/C.5/SR.1551

headquarters of ECWA in that city would be accompanied by an increase in the staff and activities of these other offices, in part due to the need for liaison and co-ordination with the regional economic commission. The ultimate requirements of the specialized agencies and other U.N. offices such as UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNICEF, etc. might vary considerably depending on the location of the ECWA headquarters. It is estimated for planning purposes that accommodations might be required for 80 to 160 staff and that the requirements for these offices might increase the total ECWA building area by 1,600 - 3,200 square metres. On this basis, total building area might be 25,000 to 27,000 square metres.

Other Considerations

18. The quality and type of office and conference accommodations should meet the normal standards of other United Nations facilities and insure the most efficient working conditions for the staff and meetings of the organization. The headquarters buildings constructed for the other regional commissions are airconditioned. When a particular site is considered, a detailed study would be made of the specific requirements for a headquarters building in that location.

19. The parking facilities required would be related to the adequacy of public transportation to serve the needs of the staff and visitors, as well as the location of the headquarters site in relation to the commercial, governmental and residential districts. It is estimated that a minimum of 250 spaces should be provided, and that as many as 500 spaces might be required.

Housing Requirements

20. In connexion with possible estimates of the requirements related to housing, hotel accommodations, transportation, schools, health and other facilities, it may be useful to consider a preliminary indication of the number of staff and staff dependents, as well as delegates, observers and press representatives attending ECWA meetings. On the basis of the staff estimate given in paragraph 11 above, and after estimated allowances for locally recruited staff, the number of internationally recruited staff may be estimated for purposes of housing requirements at approximately 150 persons. Applying an average co-efficient, staff dependents would number some 225 persons. Thus, total staff and dependents

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to be housed can be estimated to number some 375 persons. Attendance by delegates, observers and press representatives at conferences and meetings would presumably not exceed the estimated figure of 250-300 indicated in paragraph 5 above.

Privileges and Immunities

21. It will be necessary for the host government of ECWA to grant to the Commission such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the fulfillment of its purposes, and similarly to grant to representatives of members of the Commission and to officials of the Commission such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connexion with the Commission. For this purpose, it will be necessary that a Headquarters Agreement for ECWA be concluded between the United Nations and the host government.

Temporary Accommodations

22. It is customary to allocate temporary accommodations to new United Nations offices pending construction or availability of permanent Headquarters. The purpose of these temporary accommodations is to avoid waste of manpower, duplication of overhead costs which may result from dispersion of units and personnel. On the basis of actual and expected expansion from 1974 to 1977 ECWA will need temporary accommodations in the order of 5,300 square meters in 1974, 7,500 in 1975, 10,100 in 1976 and 12,700 in 1977. Account should also be taken of maintenance cost, electricity, water, heating, telephone installation, etc. As a practice, host governments have, in the past, placed temporary accommodations and facilities, free of charge, at the disposal of the United Nations. Member states will wish to take these aspects into account when making their offers.

QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Office premises

1. In what city is it proposed to accommodate the Commission Secretariat?
2. Is a specific site envisaged? (If so, provide details, including information on local transportation and parking facilities.)
3. Is the building already constructed, in construction or to be constructed? If not already constructed, please indicate expected date of completion. Would the Government pay the cost of construction?
4. What is the approximate office space in square meters or square feet?
5. On what basis would the building and headquarters site be made available to the United Nations? Would the Government donate the site and the building?

B. Conference premises

1. Do conference halls already exist in the proposed office or in a separate building?
2. Will conference halls be constructed? (If so, what is proposed?)

C. Secretariat facilities

1. Equipment

- a) Please comment on the local supply of office equipment such as: typewriters, photocopying machines, telephones, desks and filing cabinets, etc.
- b) What are the servicing facilities for the above equipment?
- c) What is the cost of electricity and other utilities?

2. Communications

- a) What is the cost of cables i) to New York; ii) to Geneva?
- b) What is the cost of long distance telephone calls for 3-minute conversations i) to New York; ii) to Geneva?
- c) Please comment on the availability and cost of telex links with New York and Geneva.

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3. Other secretariat services

- a) What access is there to computer facilities?
- b) What is the availability of printing services in English, French and Arabic?

4. Conference services

- a) What sound systems would be available in conference halls?
- b) What facilities exist for local servicing of such equipment?
- c) What services are available locally for translation from and into the official languages of the United Nations?
- d) What interpretation services are available locally from and into the official languages of the United Nations?
- e) What is the approximate cost of translation and interpretation services, if available?

5. Local staff

- a) Could the following staff be available locally for work in English, French or Arabic:
 - clerks,
 - shorthand typists,
 - maintenance technicians,
 - general maintenance staff (cleaners, messengers, guards, etc.)?
- b) Please provide approximate salary costs for this staff.
- c) Please comment on the availability of local firms to provide contractual services in any of the above categories.

D. Living conditions

1. Please comment on the availability and median prices of accommodation
 - a) in villas or apartments in high-price areas;
 - b) in villas or apartments in medium-price areas;
 - c) in apartments in low-price areas.

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2. How many first and second class hotel rooms are available in the area (please indicate average prices in each category).
3. Medical services
 - a) Are physicians and dentists readily available locally?
 - b) How many and what type of hospitals in the area could accept UN staff members?
4. Schools
 - a) What educational facilities are available to staff members and their families
 - at the primary level?
 - at the secondary level?
 - in colleges and universities?
 - b) Please comment on the extent of schooling conducted in languages other than Arabic.
5. Recreational and cultural facilities

Please provide some comments.

E. Travel facilities

1. Is there an international airport in the vicinity?
2. How many flights per week (or per day) are presently operating for destination in:
 - i) Africa
 - ii) Asia
 - iii) Europe
 - iv) Latin America
 - v) North America
3. What restrictions, if any, would apply to travel to and from the host country and temporary residence in the host country by UN staff members, by representatives of any state member of the UN, its agencies and its organs, or by any other official visitor to the ECWA secretariat?

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F. Access to governments and non-UN international organizations

1. Please provide a list of diplomatic missions/embassies in your country.
2. Please also provide a list of non-UN international organizations with offices in your country.

G. Access to media

1. Please list local and foreign information media active in the area (especially major press services).
2. Please provide details on the availability of foreign publications and newspapers in the area.

H. Special facilities offered by the host government

1. What contribution would the host government make to the secretariat towards meeting rental, furniture and equipment costs, and maintenance expenses?
2. Would currency restrictions be waived in respect of financial transactions conducted by ECWA?
3. Please comment on the privileges and immunities that could be granted to ECWA and its staff.

I. Please provide any other information that may be deemed relevant.



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the secretariat of the Economic Commission for
Western Asia

Report of the Executive Secretary

The following changes have been introduced to document E/ECWA/11, now issued as E/ECWA/11/Rev.1 "Site of the Headquarters of the Commission."

Para. 2, second sentence: Substitute the following:

"The work programme approved by ECWA at its first session covers the year 1975 only and provides a somewhat restricted basis for estimating the facilities required in connexion with the location of the organization."

For the words "In the interim" at the beginning of the third sentence substitute: "Pending the approval of ECWA's 1976-77 Programme Budget, and, 1976-1979 Medium Term Plan."

Para. 6, second sentence: For the phrase "differing seating arrangements," substitute "Flexible seating arrangements which could be adjusted ..."

Para. 10, second line: For the word "projected" substitute "1975".

Para. 11, first line: Between the words "has" and "estimated", insert the word "tentatively".

Para. 18, second sentence: For the word "of" substitute "constructed for".

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The following sentence to be added at the end of para. 18: "When a particular site is considered, a detailed study would be made of the specific requirements for a headquarters building in that location."

Questionnaire

Para. C.5: Add item "c) Please comment on the availability of local firms to provide contractual services in any of the above categories."

Para. E.3: line 5: For the word "environment" substitute "O A"