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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

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THE SECRETARY GENERAL WISHES TO TRANSMIT THE ATTACHED NOTE ON  
THE DECISIONS REACHED BY THE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AT ITS SIXTH  
SESSION, HELD IN NEW YORK FROM 2 TO 11 FEBRUARY 1953.

DECISIONS OF THE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
AT ITS SIXTH SESSION WHICH ARE OF INTEREST TO THE  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

The Transport and Communications Commission of the Economic and Social Council held its sixth session from 2 to 11 February 1953.<sup>1/</sup> Among the matters dealt with by the Commission, the following are of particular interest to the Economic Commission for Latin America or, in some cases, to the regional economic commissions of the Council in general.

I. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF INLAND TRANSPORT

The Commission took note of a report by the Secretary-General<sup>2/</sup> concerning developments in the field of inland transport in the regions of Asia and the Far East, Europe, and Latin America, since the fifth session of the Commission. The Commission in paragraph 12 of its report noted that "the Economic Commission for Latin America had undertaken the study of a number of transport problems on an ad hoc basis, among them the study of the problem of development and integration of the transport systems of the six Central-American countries, a technical mission having been sent to that area by the Economic Commission for Latin America in collaboration with Technical Assistance Administration (TAA)."

II. CO-ORDINATION OF INLAND TRANSPORT

The Commission noted the report of the Secretary-General<sup>3/</sup> summarizing international activities in the field of co-ordination of inland transport since the fifth session, and some recent national developments. The activities in this field of the International Labour Office and of the International Chamber of Commerce were noted, as were those of two regional economic commissions, namely the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). The majority of the Commission reiterated its view that the co-ordination of inland transport was an important problem, the international aspects of which

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1/ E/2363-E/CN.2/142 - Report of the sixth session.

2/ E/CN.2/121 and Corr.1, E/CN.2/121/Add.1.

3/ E/CN.2/122, E/CN.2/122/Add.1.

/were primarily

were primarily regional in character. The Commission decided that the Secretary-General should continue to report to it on developments in this field.

### III. INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRAFFIC

ECLA has already been informed of the principal developments in the field of international road traffic in the note "Traffic Regulation on the Inter-American Highway" (E/CN.12/238) which was discussed at its fourth session. The above-mentioned note contained information regarding the Convention on Road Traffic concluded at Geneva in 1949, supplemented by a paragraph on other aspects of regulation of international road traffic under consideration at the world-wide level, and one on problems requiring action at the regional level. Further action and recommendations in those fields of particular interest to ECLA made by the Transport and Communications Commission at its sixth session are summarized below.

#### (1) Convention on Road Traffic

The Commission noted that, as reported by the Secretary-General,<sup>1/</sup> the Convention on Road Traffic had come into force on 26 March 1952. The following countries have so far ratified or acceded to the Convention: Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Philippines, Sweden, Union of South Africa, and United States of America. The Secretary-General informed the Commission in his note of the consideration given at the fourth session of ECLA to the need for an international agreement on traffic regulation on the Inter-American Highway (E/CN.12/237 and E/CN.12/238) and of its resolution requesting the preparation of a general study of the international aspects of the problems of automotive transport in Latin America, with special emphasis on those relating to the Inter-American Highway (E/CN.12/288). He also informed the Commission of the adoption of a resolution by the Fifth Pan American Highway Congress (Lima, 1951) and reiterated at the Special Pan American Highway Congress (Mexico City, 1952) recommending that the American countries who have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention on Road Traffic should proceed to do so at an early date.

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<sup>1/</sup> E/CN.2/138.

(2) Driver Licensing

In document E/CN.12/238 mention is made of the recommendations made by the Commission to the Economic and Social Council concerning the problem arising from the fact that while the Convention on Road Traffic provides for recognition by Contracting States of valid domestic driving permits issued after proof of competence to drive, it does not define this proof of competence or deal with the unification of conditions to be fulfilled by drivers. The Economic and Social Council having adopted the recommendations of the Commission,<sup>1/</sup> a Committee of Experts on Licensing of Motor Vehicle Drivers was set up, composed of six members, one from each of the following regions: Africa, Asia and the Far East, Europe, Middle East, North America, and South America. It met in September-October 1952 and submitted its report<sup>2/</sup> to the Commission. In accordance with its terms of reference, its report contains draft uniform minimum regulations for the licensing of motor vehicle drivers, which are recommended for consideration by governments in connexion with their domestic laws and regulations, and also contains certain draft general provisions applicable to international traffic for consideration as an annex to the Convention on Road Traffic. On the basis of the Committee's recommendations relative to international traffic, the Commission prepared a draft amended Annex 8 to the Convention on Road Traffic. In its resolution 4, the main recommendation made to the Economic and Social Council on driver licensing is

- "(a) That the Secretary-General be instructed to circulate the report of the Committee of Experts on Licensing of Motor Vehicle Drivers to all States Members of the United Nations or of any of the specialized agencies;
- (i) Requesting them to consider in connexion with their domestic laws and regulations the minimum uniform regulations recommended by the Committee; and
  - (ii) Drawing to their attention the attached amendment to Annex 8 to the Convention on Road Traffic proposed by the Committee of Experts and revised by the Commission, and requesting the governments of those States which are Parties to the Convention to notify the Secretary-General if they accept the proposed amendment in accordance with article 31 of the Convention."

<sup>1/</sup> E/2152, resolution 379B (XIII)

<sup>2/</sup> E/CN.2/133-E/CN.2/CONF.2/3 and Corr. 1 and Corr. 2

The Commission also recommended further study of requirements for mental and physical fitness of motor vehicle drivers, for which assistance should be sought from the World Health Organization (WHO).

(3) Road Signs and Signals

As was stated in document E/CN.12/238 a Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals was entrusted with the problem of devising a uniform world-wide system of road signs and signals. The Commission had before it at its sixth session the final report of the Group<sup>1/</sup> which, in accordance with its terms of reference, contains a draft Convention on a Uniform System of Road Signs and Signals. The Commission considered that this draft convention may appropriately be placed before governments for adoption on a world-wide basis, and discussed the procedure by which this should be done. It noted that the Group of Experts suggested the convening of a conference of governments for this purpose. However, the Commission was of the opinion that in view of the thorough preparation of the draft convention the holding of such a conference would not be essential and might delay the adoption of the uniform system. The Commission decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council, inter alia

- "(a) that the draft convention should be known as the Protocol on a Uniform System of Road Signs and Signals (New York, 1953);
- (b) that the Secretary-General be requested:
  - (i) to open the Protocol on a Uniform System of Road Signs and Signals for signature until 31 December 1954 by the governments mentioned in article 35, paragraph 1 of the draft convention as revised in the annex to this resolution:
  - (ii) to bring to the attention of the governments the information and explanations contained in the Final Report of the Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals (document E/CN.2/119-E/CN.2/CONF.1/12)."

The Commission was also informed by the Secretary-General<sup>2/</sup> of a resolution adopted by the Special Pan American Highway Congress (Mexico City, 1952) recommending inter alia that the draft convention be adopted and implemented by the American countries at the earliest date.

1/ E/CN.2/119 - E/CN.2/CONF.1/12

2/ E/CN.2/125

#### IV CUSTOMS FORMALITIES

As was indicated in E/CN.12/238 the Convention on Road Traffic envisaged a further international agreement on the simplification of customs and other frontier formalities, and the Commission initiated consideration of the conclusion on a world-wide basis of conventions relating to customs formalities for the temporary importation of private motor vehicles and their equipment, and for the personal effects of tourists travelling by any means of transport. In accordance with the resolution of the Economic and Social Council,<sup>1/</sup> adopted on the recommendation of the Commission, the Secretary-General circulated to all governments which were invited to the United Nations Conference on Road and Motor Transport, held in Geneva in August-September 1949, the draft International Customs Convention on Touring prepared under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Europe, together with the proposals submitted jointly by the World Touring and Automobile Organization (OTA) and the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO), and requested the views of governments on the desirability of concluding international conventions on customs formalities for (1) the temporary importation of private vehicles and their equipment, and (2) tourism (i.e., the personal effects of tourists travelling by any means of transport), and on the suitability of the drafts mentioned above as a basis of discussion for concluding such conventions.

At its sixth session the Commission had before it a report by the Secretary-General<sup>2/</sup> containing documents which were circulated to governments and comments received thereon. The Commission decided to recommend that a conference be convened to consider the conclusion of a convention covering the temporary importation of private road vehicles carrying persons and also to conclude a convention on tourism. The following paragraphs of resolution 5 adopted by the Commission will be of particular interest to ECLA. It is recommended therein

<sup>1/</sup> E/2152, resolution 379D (XIII)

<sup>2/</sup> E/CN.2/135 and Corr. 1 and Corr. 2 and Add.1 and Add.2

/"(a) to convene

- "(a) to convene as early as possible in 1954, and preferably in Geneva, a conference of governments for the conclusion on a world-wide basis of two conventions relating to customs formalities, namely
- (i) for the temporary importation of private road motor vehicles carrying persons and the equipment of such vehicles,
  - (ii) for tourism (i.e., the personal effects of tourists travelling by any means of transport);
- "(b) to circulate to all the governments invited to the conference
- (i) the Secretary-General's report entitled 'Customs Formalities for the Temporary Importation of Private Vehicles and for Tourism' (E/CN.2/135 and Corr.1 and Corr.2 and Add.1 and 2) containing drafts of such conventions and comments thereon, and
  - (ii) the relevant part of the report of the Transport and Communications Commission on its sixth session;
- "(c) to invite governments who have not yet done so to transmit their comments on the texts contained in document E/CN.2/135 and Corr. 1 and 2 and E/CN.2/135/Add.1 and 2;"