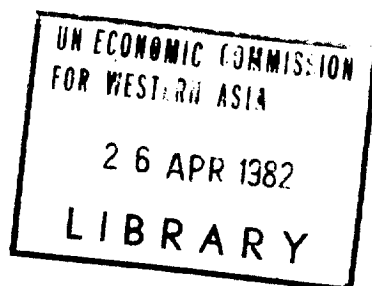




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FOLLOW-UP ACTION AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL ON UNITED NATIONS
WORLD CONFERENCES AND ECWA REGIONAL MEETINGS

Expert Group Meeting on Foreign Trade and Industrial Statistics

(Amman, 5-10 September 1981)

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. In pursuance of the implementation of its authorized work programme 1980-1981, the secretariat convened an "Expert Group Meeting on Foreign Trade and Industrial Statistics" in Amman, Jordan, from 5 to 10 September 1981. It was organized in co-ordination with the United Nations Statistical Office at Headquarters and the Department of Statistics in Jordan. The following bodies and agencies were represented in the Meeting: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Statistical Office (New York), Council of Arab Economic Unity, General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries. Department of Statistics in Jordan, public and private organizations in Jordan: central banks, ministries, chambers of commerce and industry, universities, etc.

In addition, three consultants to the secretariat attended the Meeting.

2. Discussion of the participants centered around national practices in the field of external trade and industrial statistics. Emphasis was given to observed similarities and discrepancies in concepts and definitions adopted in the Region and to specific difficulties encountered within these areas of statistics.
3. About ten papers were prepared for the Meeting by the consultants, the secretariat, the United Nations Statistical Office and other representatives. A final report was prepared after the Meeting, reflecting the main topics discussed and containing integrally the recommendations adopted in the Meeting.

Recommendations of the Meeting

4. The recommendations adopted in the Meeting were divided into two separate parts: Part I relates to international trade statistics, and Part II to industrial statistics.

The main points of Part I of the Meeting's recommendations, which were addressed to the Economic Commission for Western Asia, are the following:

- (a) Translation into Arabic of the basic documents on international trade published by the United Nations;
- (b) Organization of a joint custom officers and statisticians meeting on foreign trade statistics;
- (c) Organization of training courses, in co-operation with Arab and foreign statistical institutes for middle-level and high-level personnel of customs and statistical offices;
- (d) Assistance to national statistical offices in modernizing, standardizing and expanding the international trade classifications.

The main points of Part II of the Meeting's recommendations relate to the following:

- (a) Translation into Arabic of the basic documents on industrial statistics;
- (b) Organization of seminars and workshops on the various aspects of the industrial statistics;
- (c) Technical assistance to national statistical offices in the field of industrial surveys and censuses.

Follow-up action by the secretariat

5. In pursuance of the above-mentioned recommendations, the following actions were taken by the secretariat:

- (a) A joint custom officers and statisticians meeting is provisionally planned for the last quarter of 1983;
- (b) The United Nations document "Recommendations for the 1983 World Programme for Industrial Statistics" is now being translated into Arabic. It is also planned to translate the new version of the "International Trade Statistics Concepts and Definitions" and of the "International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics" as soon as these are published;

(c) Preparations for implementing the "ECWA Regional Industrial Training Workshop in Connexion with the 1983 World Program of Industrial Statistics" are underway. This workshop financed by UNDP is to be organized in co-ordination with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (Baghdad), in the first quarter of 1983.