

United Nations
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL

Nations Unies
CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
ET SOCIAL

UNRESTRICTED

E/CN.3/SR.2
28 January 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

FIRST SESSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Tuesday, 28 January 1947, at 11:00 a.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Mr. H. Marshall	(Canada)
	Mr. G. Daemois	(France)
	Mr. P.J. Idenburg	(Netherlands)
	Mr. R.G.L. Allen	(United Kingdom)
	Mr. I.S. Malyzhev	(USSR)
	Mr. S.A. Rice	(United States)

Mr. Erichsen was present as observer for
Mr. G. Jahn of Norway.

Representatives of Specialized Agencies:

	Mr. R.M. Woodbury	(ILO)
	Mr. C. Tacuter	(FAO)
	Mr. S.V. Arnaldo	(UNESCO)
	Mr. S. Hicks	(International Monetary Fund)

Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations:

	Mr. Teper	(AFL)
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Secretariat:

	Mr. H. Campion	(Representing the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs)
	Mr. W.J. Bruce	(Secretary to Commission)

Mr. Campion speaking for the Assistant Secretary-General of Economic Affairs opened the meeting and asked the Commission to elect a Chairman.

Election of Chairman

Mr. Herbert Marshall was proposed as Chairman. His nomination was seconded and Mr. Marshall was then elected.

/Election of Other Officers

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The CHAIRMAN then asked the Commission to elect a Vice-Chairman. It was proposed that Mr. Mahalanobis be elected in absentia. His nomination was seconded and Mr. Mahalanobis was elected. Mr. Rife was elected Rapporteur for a term of office of one year.

Participation by the Specialized Agencies and the Non-Governmental Organizations

In accordance with the request of the Commission that the Secretariat should report on the procedure established for sending papers and reports of the Commission to the Group A members of the Non-Governmental Organizations, the attention of the Commission was drawn to Rule 10 in the Rules of Procedure. The Chairman reported on the procedure under which the representatives of the Specialized Agencies could participate in the deliberations of the Statistical Commission. It was announced that representatives of the Specialized Agencies were invited to attend meetings of the Economic and Social Council, its Commissions and Committees and to participate without vote in their deliberations with respect to items on their agenda in which the Specialized Agencies had indicated an interest. In connection with the non-governmental organizations the Chairman said that four organizations had been granted category (a) consultative status with the Economic and Social Council:

World Federation of Trade Unions
International Co-Operative Alliance
American Federation of Labour
International Chamber of Commerce

The decision of the Council regarding the arrangements for the consultation is contained in Document E/4th/Rev.2. In accordance with the ruling of the Council of 21 June 1946 the Chairman said he would bring to the attention of the Commission any requests made by such non-governmental organizations for the opportunity of expressing the views of their organization.

/Adoption of the Agenda

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The Provisional Agenda (E/STAT/12), was adopted with the following additions and modifications in the order in which the remaining items should be discussed:

Item 6 should become Item 11
Item 7 should become Item 12
Item 8 should become Item 9
Item 9 should become Item 13
Item 10 should become Item 6
Item 11 should become Item 7
Item 12 should become Item 8
Item 13 should become Item 14
Item 14 should become Item 15
Item 15 should become Item 16

Two other Items were added to the Agenda. One to follow:

Item 8 "Consideration of relations with
Non-Governmental Agencies",

and a new

Item 10 "Proposed 1950 Census of the Americas".

Consideration of Relations with Specialized Agencies

At the request of the CHAIRMAN the Director of the Statistical Office of the United Nations described the steps which had so far been taken to co-ordinate the statistical activities of the Specialized Agencies and the United Nations.

He called the attention of members of the Commission to the recommendation of the nuclear Statistical Commission which had proposed that there should be established a Statistical Co-ordinating Committee comprising representatives of each of the statistical services of the Specialized Agencies and of the United Nations. He said that it had not yet been possible to establish this Co-ordinating Committee formally since working agreements had not been legally established between the United Nations and some of the proposed Specialized Agencies. During the last quarter of 1946 however informal talks had been held between the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies on the scope of their

/statistical

statistical work and an informal meeting of the Statistical Co-ordinating Committee had been held in December. This meeting, though it was of a preliminary character, had gone a considerable way toward getting agreement on the scope of statistical work to be undertaken by the different organizations. It was proposed that this Committee should meet regularly in the future and would settle any outstanding points of difference between the Specialized Agencies themselves and between them and the United Nations. It would be an official body in which the proposed plans of the different Specialized Agencies could be discussed.

Statistical Programmes of the Specialized Agencies

The CHAIRMAN called upon the representatives of the Specialized Agencies present to report upon their statistical programmes and to express their views regarding the matter of the co-ordinating of statistical activities.

Mr. R.M. WOODBURY representing the International Labour Office stated that the ILO had an established programme for the collection and publication of statistical data and had been active for many years in efforts to improve the quality of statistics collected and in the general effort of promoting international comparability in statistics. He said that the ILO would be glad to furnish to the United Nations and to other organizations such statistics as they may require on manpower, employment, unemployment, wages, cost of living, industrial disputes, industrial accidents and other disputes in the field of labour statistics. As part of its work the ILO sought to promote, through international conferences of labour statisticians, the maximum amount of comparability in the data collected by various countries. The Sixth International Conference of Labour statisticians is scheduled to meet in Montreal on 4 August 1947. The agenda for this Conference has been prepared and was available to members of the Commission. In addition, the ILO has been
/preparing

preparing materials for an international convention in the field of labour statistics.

Mr. WOODBURY stated that the ILO would be glad to co-operate with the United Nations and with other Specialized Agencies in the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information, as well as in efforts to improve the quality and comparability of statistics. With regard to the relations of the Statistical Commission to the ILO, Mr. Woodbury pointed out that should the Statistical Commission wish to assume the work of the Committee of Statistical Experts, Article 8 of the International Convention on Economic Statistics under which the Committee of Statistical Experts was organized, would limit the power of that Committee to deal with labour statistics.

The CHAIRMAN called upon Mr. C. Taeuber, representative of the Food and Agricultural Organization.

Mr. TAEUBER said that the FAO had assumed the interests and records of the International Institute of Agriculture formerly of Rome. As part of its functions the FAO will continue to publish the Year Book of Agricultural Statistics. FAO will collect and publish current statistics on agricultural production, consumption, stocks, and in collaboration with other international agencies, statistics on agricultural prices, trade, and income to agriculture. The FAO will expect to receive data from other Agencies on population as well as trade and income. It is hoped that such data will be provided in a manner suitable to the needs of FAO. Plans are also being considered for the publication of world food appraisals, probably a semi-annual publication. The material for this publication has been obtained thus far from the International Emergency Food Committee, whose future has not yet been determined. In addition FAO is contemplating a Commodity Review Series. This publication would contain information on the production, consumption /and demand

and demand for agricultural products. It is anticipated that the first of this series dealing with wheat will be published in March 1947. Others dealing with wool, cotton, sugar, fats and oils are being planned. It is expected that this series will be published at least semi-annually, and possibly, in some instances, quarterly. There is consideration expanding some of the work undertaken by the Rome Institute especially in the fields of forestry and fisheries.

FAO has prepared a proposal and submitted it to Governments for a minimum programme for a 1950 World Census of Agriculture. Plans are under way to assist Governments in the procedures of taking such a census and of expanding the minimum list of items whenever it is possible. Regional conferences beginning in Europe in the spring of 1947, to study a minimum list of items and to provide training programmes in census methodology are being considered by FAO.

In commenting on the programmes as presented by both the ILO and the FAO, it was noted that both Specialized Agencies are dealing with data on food prices and family expenditures for food. The request was made of the representatives of the Specialized Agencies to inform the Commission of the means that had been taken to ensure co-ordination of their activities. It was stated that procedures and machinery have been established providing reciprocal representation upon the Committees of the Specialized Agencies dealing with standards and collection of statistics of common interest.

In commenting on the need for collaboration between Specialized Agencies and the possibilities of overlapping and duplication in their activities it was pointed out that the Statistical Commission has responsibility as a central co-ordinating group. Several members of the Commission emphasized the importance of collaboration and co-ordination in the statistical work of the Specialized Agencies and that of the United Nations.

/MR. ARNALDO

Mr. ARNALDO said that it was too early for UNESCO to have developed a statistical programme, but that UNESCO had authorized the publication of an International Educational Yearbook and set up a Committee on Educational Statistics to prepare for this publication. UNESCO is primarily concerned with the fields of education, science and culture, and with the field of mass communications. The organization is authorized to receive reports from its members on laws, regulations and statistics relating to the above fields.

Mr. E. HICKS said that under the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund, all members of the Fund are required to furnish detailed information necessary to the effective discharge of the duties of the Fund. The Fund would welcome the help of the United Nations and other international organizations in supplying statistical material in the form which the Fund required. The Fund has a special interest in the collection of information on balance of payments, capital movements and other financial data. It hoped it would be able to collect such information in a form suitable to the needs of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies.

In the discussion of this problem at the Statistical Co-ordinating Committee there was general satisfaction with the principles laid down. However, a more concrete statement needs to be worked out regarding the responsibility of the Fund as a primary agency for the collection of balance of payments data. Mr. HICKS told of the practice established in the International Monetary Fund whereby Country Books were provided to the directors and the members of the research staff containing current data necessary to the operation of the organization. It was suggested that some such similar practice might be adopted as a means of exchanging information.

The International Monetary Fund has prepared a draft of the information requests it proposes to make to member countries, and which

/the Fund

the Fund proposes to discuss with the members of the Statistical Co-ordinating Committee. In addition it contemplates publishing a Bulletin of Financial Statistics.

As a summary to the discussion of the relations of the United Nations with Specialized Agencies it was suggested that a request be made to the Director of the Statistical Office to make a report at the next session of the Statistical Commission:

- (a) on the statistics which will be required by the United Nations and by the Specialized Agencies respectively,
- (b) on the possible duplication or overlapping which might arise in the collection of statistics by international agencies,
- (c) on the proposals for the allocation of responsibilities for statistical activities among the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies,
- (d) on the methods proposed by which co-ordination in specific cases can best be accomplished,
- (e) on those gaps or omissions in statistical plans of international organizations which should be filled.

It was agreed that this proposal should be reformulated and presented to the Commission under Item 15 of the agenda.

The meeting rose at 1:20 p.m.
