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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION AND GENERAL QUESTIONS

Report of the Rapporteur

I am happy to submit for the consideration of the members the report on the work successfully concluded by the Ad Hoc Committee on Coordination and General Questions, which was constituted in virtue of a decision of a plenary meeting of the fourth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America held on 29 May 1951.

I must note, with deep satisfaction, that this important Committee enjoyed the constant assistance and valuable co-operation of most of the representatives of the countries which make up this young, but already meritorious, regional commission of the United Nations.

Under the chairmanship of Mr. Pierre Hudicourt, the representative of the Republic of Haiti, the Committee held eight meetings during which it dealt with the issues which may have the greatest influence on the future and the basic orientation of the Economic Commission for Latin America, as well as with its relations with other international organs and groups, governmental

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/or non-governmental
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or non-governmental, of undisputed social and economic importance to the American Continent.

The prudence with which the Committee approached those problems and settled them - which will shortly result in progressively closer and mutually advantageous relations and ties - is doubtless due to the strong spirit of mutual understanding and conciliation shown by the representatives who took part in the discussions, and is no less due to their goodwill, which enabled them to accomplish a task which will have effects of unpredictable significance on world peace and the welfare of the peoples of our Hemisphere.

In laying emphasis on those qualities, I should like to mention most particularly the tact of the representative of France, Mr. Philippe de Seynes, who was Chairman of the Working Group on the relations between ECLA and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council of the Organization of American States and the co-ordination of their respective activities.

I must also draw attention to the very conciliatory spirit of the representative of the United States, Mr. Merwin L. Bohan, who, despite definite differences of opinion arising from a different point of view, with fine tact basically associated himself with the thinking and aspirations of Latin America. The important statement he made in the Working Group to the gratification of all delegations is evidence of his attitude: "The United States delegation", said Mr. Bohan, "wishes to state that the Government of the United States is deeply impressed by the high quality of the work being done by ECLA; it wishes that

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work to continue with the strongest and most sincere support of the Government of the United States".

That spirit of harmony can only be attributed to the high personal qualities of all the representatives, their deep human understanding and their sincere desire for international co-operation, and to the fact that public opinion in all countries at the present time is becoming increasingly concerned because the new economic trends arising from the world political crisis threaten to cause even greater disturbances in trade among nations and to impose new privation and suffering upon millions of human beings struggling - and who have been struggling for centuries - in poverty and the most wretched despair.

In a world that is closely knit and necessarily interdependent, it is impossible to conceive of or to tolerate anachronistic privileges and discriminatory practices, for all the peoples of this world are in the same boat and must go down or be saved together.

Those were the preoccupations of the members of the Committee; they were guided by sincere concern for the anguish of depressed peoples. That was their concern when they sought adequate methods to achieve effective and concerted international action to put a stop to the state of affairs which was gaining strength in the New World and to promote the restoration of confidence among nations - a condition which could brook no delay. That was their objective when they focussed their attention on the relations with and the co-ordination of functions of ECLA with other organs concerned with the same

/problems and

problems and created to promote economic development and help to raise the standard of living of the peoples of Latin America.

The resolutions and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Co-ordination and General Questions during this fourth session constitute, in our view, an important step forward; there is reason to believe that at future sessions, with the intelligent and valuable assistance of our Executive Secretary, ECLA will be able to strengthen its sound structure and overcome new obstacles through practical achievements.

I shall now review the questions considered and resolved in the Committee in the hope that they will meet with the approval of this plenary assembly.

**ECLA-FAO JOINT WORK PROGRAMME AND OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY**

The Committee noted with satisfaction the report on the ECLA-FAO joint work programme, and particularly, the agreement signed in 1950 between the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Director General of the FAO. Both the agreement and the joint work of the two bodies in Latin America obtained the unanimous approval of the Committee. The representative of the FAO, in a statement before the Committee, emphasized the great importance the FAO attached to co-operation with ECLA on agricultural and economic questions of mutual concern and expressed satisfaction regarding the manner in which that co-operation had been effected.

The Committee also took note of the initiative taken jointly by ECLA and the FAO on the question of agricultural credit. In view of
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the statement contained in the Executive Secretary's report that several Member Governments had not **yet replied to the questionnaire** on that matter, it decided to suggest to those governments which had not done so, that they should transmit their replies as soon as possible, so that the Executive Secretary and the Director-General of the FAO could convene a meeting of experts on agricultural credit in one of the Central American countries, as agreed at the third session of the Commission held in Montevideo (E/CN.12/249).

The Committee also took note of the establishment of a Latin American Agricultural Training Centre at Santiago, Chile, at the joint initiative of the FAO, the United Nations, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Government of Chile. In a resolution (E/CN.12/247), the Committee noted with satisfaction that information and agreed to request governments to give special attention to the opportunities afforded by the training centre.

The Committee considered with special interest the report on the importance of forests and forest products to the economy of Latin America (E/CN.12/235) and adopted a resolution (E/CN.12/246) recommending that the Executive Secretary should continue that type of work and also recommending to member governments a series of measures of great importance relating to forestry policy. It specifically requested them, in preparing and carrying out their programmes of forestry development, to take into account the study contained in the above mentioned report on forestry and forest products.

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RELATIONS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Committee considered the note submitted by the Executive Secretary on the consultative agreements between ECLA and non-governmental organizations. Having taken into account the fact that the Economic and Social Council, at its thirteenth session, would study the problem of relations between the regional commissions and the non-governmental organizations, it decided to await the results of the Council's study before taking any decision on its permanent rules of procedure. In the meantime, it decided to apply the rules established in resolutions 288 and 289 (X) of the Economic and Social Council, in particular those referring to consultative arrangements with non-governmental organizations. In addition, to supplement those measures, it agreed to modify any provision of the Commission's present rules of procedure which might be incompatible with resolutions 288 and 289 (X) mentioned above (E/CN.12/248).

SOUTH AMERICAN PETROLEUM INSTITUTE

The Economic and Social Council requested the Economic Commission for Latin America to express an opinion on the application submitted by the South American Petroleum Institute for consultative status in category B. The Committee examined the facts of the matter and more particularly the report submitted by the Executive Secretary, and having concluded that the activities of the South American Petroleum Institute were of value to the economic development of the Latin American countries, agreed to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that the Institute should be accorded consultative status in /category B.

category B. (E/CN.12/253).

MEASURES TO INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF
SUPPLIES OF EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL MATERIALS

The Committee examined the report presented by the Executive Secretary referring to the resolution on measures to increase the availability of supplies of educational, scientific and cultural materials, approved at the third session, and took special note of the fact that no country had as yet replied to the questionnaire on this subject. The Committee therefore adopted a resolution in which, reiterating the importance attached by the member governments to the free international circulation of such materials, it requested the governments to reply as soon as possible to the questionnaire. The Committee also agreed to renew the request made to the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Director-General of UNESCO that they should, at their convenience, provide for the establishment of the Working Group envisaged in the resolution of the Commission at its third session to which reference has been made. (E/CN.12/AC.14/9)

TRAFFIC REGULATION ON THE INTER-AMERICAN HIGHWAY

The Committee also discussed traffic regulation on the Inter-American Highway. After studying the note submitted in this connexion by the Executive Secretary and carefully considering the precise question whether the governments concerned should have more information upon which to base their decision regarding the possibility of concluding an agreement on this point, decided to request the Executive Secretary to prepare a general study of the international
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aspects of the problems of road transport in Latin America, with special emphasis on those concerning the Inter-American Highway. (E/CN.12/AC.14/10).

COORDINATION WITH THE INTER-AMERICAN
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

The Committee discussed, first in plenary session, the question of co-ordination between the Commission and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council of the Organization of American States, and heard statements from the representatives of the latter organization. It thereupon agreed to form a working group composed of the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, the United States of America, France, Guatemala, Haiti and Mexico, who after holding three meetings, reached complete accord and submitted to the Committee a draft resolution which was approved unanimously. (E/CN.12/AC.14/12/Rev.1).

The unanimous opinion of the delegations during the entire discussion was that co-ordination at the Secretariat level was entirely satisfactory. They agreed to form a Permanent Committee on Co-ordination with representatives from both Secretariats to continue this important work.

Nevertheless, some members of the Commission brought up the question of raising the work of co-ordination between the two agencies to the government level, insisting that policies followed by governments with respect to ECLA and to the Inter-American Economic and Social Council were not always well co-ordinated. Although the
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majority of the members of the Commission were of the opinion that co-ordination at the Secretariat level satisfactorily solved problems of co-ordination, it was unanimously agreed to establish special machinery for the timely review of co-ordination problems at the inter-governmental level.

This machinery, which is set up in the same resolution (E/CN.12/AC.14/12/Rev.1) consists in inviting the Inter-American Economic and Social Council to designate an official of the Organization of American States who, together with the official of the United Nations designated by ECLA, will study the arrangements they consider necessary and adequate to ensure that co-ordination at the government level is achieved in a practical and positive manner.

The Committee, in a separate recommendation, designated the Executive Secretary, Mr. Raul Prebisch, to represent ECLA in the study that will be made of this matter.

The suggestion that meetings of ECLA and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council should be held jointly or simultaneously as a means of achieving co-ordination at the government level was rejected.

The Guatemalan delegation submitted a draft resolution on "Coordination between ECLA and official bodies in charge of economic policies of member countries". (E/CN.12/AC.14/4).

In discussing this draft resolution, the Committee was in agreement with its objectives and directed that because of its importance it should be included textually in the Rapporteur's report

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to the plenary session of the Commission. The text of this motion is as follows:

"THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA,

CONSIDERING that at its third session it recommended to Latin American Governments the adoption of specific and co-ordinated procedures to give an impetus to the economic development of their countries; and

CONSIDERING that it is most desirable that the Economic Commission for Latin America should maintain closer and more direct contact with the national bodies in charge of the economic policy of Member States, for the purpose of:

- (i) giving form and reality to the procedures referred to in the first paragraph;
- (ii) ensuring greater ease and despatch in the handling of matters generally and in the completion of studies and consultations, the continuity of which must be maintained for the better achievement of ECLA's purposes;
- (iii) ensuring that at no time shall interest in the work, studies, and recommendations of the Commission lapse but that, on the contrary, interest shall be continuous between sessions, and
- (iv) maintaining the common point of view that so happily has been achieved and continued through the periodic meetings of the Commission.

RECOMMENDS to the Executive Secretary that, as far as

/circumstances

circumstances permit, it should achieve closer and more direct contact with the Latin American governmental departments and agencies in charge of economic policy or planning or of those economic activities in which the Commission is basically interested; and

URGES the Latin American Governments to consider favourably the desirability of the creation in each of the Member Countries of a special body or the selection of an existing body to take charge of the maintenance of permanent contact and effective collaboration with the Executive Secretary of ECLA, for the better achievement of the purposes set forth in the preamble of this resolution".

In submitting this brief account of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Co-ordination and General Questions, complex and difficult as it was in reconciling differences of approach and, sometimes, opposing points of view, I should like to reiterate my gratitude to the Commission for the honour it accorded me - and my country - in designating me its Rapporteur, and to express my most heartfelt wishes for the consolidation and progress of the Economic Commission for Latin America.
