



## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Thursday, 16 July 1970

at 3.10 p.m.

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA

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*President:* Mr. MARAMIS (Indonesia)

## AGENDA ITEM 6

Regional co-operation (*continued*)

- (a) Reports of the regional economic commissions and of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut (E/4733 and Add.1, E/4781 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, E/4806, E/4806/Summary, E/4822, E/4822/Summary, E/4823 and Add.1, E/4823/Summary, E/4824, E/4824/Summary, E/4825, E/4884, E/4886; E/L.1335 and Corr.1, E/L.1336, E/L.1337/Rev.1, E/L.1338)
- (b) Report on the meetings of the executive secretaries (E/4859)

1. Mr. DATCOU (Observer for Romania), speaking at the invitation of the President, said it was highly encouraging to note that international co-operation was gaining increasing recognition as an inseparable aspect of economic and social progress and as a sound basis for the establishment of normal relations between all States. His delegation was also gratified that the regional economic commissions had such an important part to play within the framework of that co-operation; their role should be enhanced still further, particularly in view of the close interrelationship between problems at the regional level and the problems with which mankind as a whole was confronted. Romania attached particular importance to the work of the regional economic commissions, which corresponded to one of the basic objectives of its own foreign policy, namely, the promotion of active co-operation among all States, regardless of their political and social system. The commissions' efforts to eliminate the chronic phenomenon of under-development were of particular importance in view of the tasks and increased responsibilities with which they were to be entrusted in connexion with the Second United Nations Development Decade.

2. His delegation's special interest in ECE was explained by Romania's constant desire to promote co-operation in the economic, political, technical, scientific and cultural

fields with all countries of Europe and, indeed, of the world. It considered that ECE could and should do more to stimulate and expand co-operation between European countries in order to achieve a greater relaxation of tension, create confidence and strengthen security in Europe.

3. Being consistently in favour of the principle of the universality of the United Nations — a principle which had been stressed by the Secretary-General both at the twenty-fifth anniversary meeting of the General Assembly and at the opening of the present session of the Economic and Social Council — his delegation still urged, as it had done in the past, that the German Democratic Republic should be admitted to participate, on an equal basis, in the work of ECE. Its admission would not only put an end to the discrimination practised against a sovereign European State, but would also have a favourable impact on and facilitate ECE's work. His delegation had therefore been the more disappointed when, once again, such participation had been opposed by certain countries.

4. His delegation entirely subscribed to the order of priorities indicated by the Executive Secretary of ECE, and it noted with satisfaction the endeavour that was being made to relate the Commission's long-term priorities to the factors of most importance for economic development and international co-operation. The exchange of information and experience in ECE did much to promote European economic co-operation and at the same time made an essential contribution to world-wide international co-operation.

5. Intra-European commerce would benefit greatly from the gradual elimination of economic, administrative and trade-policy obstacles, as well as the removal of all discrimination in trade between member countries with different social and political systems. The Executive Secretary's analytical report on the state of intra-European trade (E/ECE/761), discussed at ECE's twenty-fifth session, offered a valuable basis for the preparation of specific recommendations with a view to the expansion of trade between European countries.

6. Problems of the environment obviously affected, in one way or another, every country in the world, and it was equally obvious that only through a set of specific measures, covering planning and the rational use and effective control of the environment, would it be possible to maintain the ecological balance of the biosphere. His delegation therefore fully supported action at the international level and greater international co-operation in that field. It was for that reason, too, that Romania had been keenly interested in ECE's recommendations regarding the holding of an ECE Conference on Problems relating to Environment at Prague in 1971.

7. Mr. BRECKENRIDGE (Ceylon) said that the importance of the work of the regional economic commissions and of the regional approach had been aptly described in the report of the meetings of the executive secretaries (see E/4859, para. 6), but he cautioned against allowing emphasis on regional co-operation to obscure the final objective, which was global co-operation.

8. Referring specifically to the annual report of ECAFE (E/4823), he noted the importance of the fact that the Commission's member countries had, in the ECAFE Declaration adopted at the twenty-sixth session (*ibid.*, part III, resolution 103 (XXVI)), recognized "their capability to organize their own development, both individually and collectively". Paragraphs 504, 508, 516 ff. of the report rightly emphasized concerted action, concentration and co-ordination, as well as an interdisciplinary and inter-agency approach, which were of prime importance to the success of the Second United Nations Development Decade. Similar emphasis was to be found in the report of the Secretary-General on the role of the regional economic commissions in development planning (E/4875) and in the report on the meetings of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions. He further noted that the major role to be played by UNDP had been emphasized in paragraph 518 of the ECAFE report, as well as in the report of the meetings of the executive secretaries (see E/4859, para. 10). While appreciating the various developments described in those paragraphs, however, his delegation hoped that they did not constitute a cloak for action that would transform the multilateral United Nations system into a form of control over national activities.

9. He recalled that, in its general statement on the subject (1704th meeting), his delegation had expressed its preference for trade over aid, and called for a measure of monetary liberalization in the ECAFE region, perhaps in the form of a payments union. It was therefore encouraging to note that that view was reflected in paragraphs 309 to 327 of ECAFE's annual report, as well as the Commission's programme of work. In that connexion, he said that his delegation understood trade promotion to mean the entire complex question of studies of primary commodities, their marketing and production; and he therefore hoped that special attention would be given to those aspects, whose importance had apparently already been recognized in paragraph 58 of the report of the meetings of the executive secretaries, where it was stated that "There was general feeling that the production side of the development process played a vital role in export promotion and should not be underplayed".

10. Mr. NOLAN (Ireland) said that his delegation appreciated the work done during the past year by the regional economic commissions, which were bringing the role of the United Nations in economic and social matters into close relationship with the work of national administrations. Ireland was gratified by the co-operation between European countries and the co-ordination of policies which took place within ECE, and it hoped that activities in the field of East-West trade would develop rapidly and effec-

tively on the basis of the Executive Secretary's valuable analytical report on the state of intra-European trade.

11. He commended the Executive Secretary of ECE on his choice of structural changes in European industry as a priority topic for general debate at the Commission's twenty-sixth session. His delegation looked forward to a meaningful debate on the subject instead of the usual series of unrelated statements on national development, and it hoped that the expected success of the experiment would serve as a precedent for other regions and the Council itself.

12. Mr. EVANS (World Federation of United Nations Associations), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that WFUNA hoped the Council would decide to prepare a study and recommendations on ways in which the regional economic commissions could be strengthened for the purpose of furthering the economic and social development of their respective regions during the Second United Nations Development Decade. He put forward the following suggestions for consideration in that connexion.

13. As the success of the Second Development Decade would largely depend on prosperity in both Eastern and Western Europe, ECE, in consultation with UNCTAD, might explore the possibility of increasing aid and trade in relation to the targets and policies agreed on for the Decade. To that end, it might strengthen still further its links with CMEA and OECD, with a view to encouraging the co-operation of all its members in achieving the Decade's objectives.

14. In order to emphasize the vital role of the regional approach to economic and social development, the regional economic commissions might each be authorized to elect a representative to the Governing Council of UNDP. With their intimate knowledge of conditions in their member countries, the commissions were better placed than other United Nations bodies to give advice on what was needed to achieve greater social justice and equality of opportunity. They could provide an invaluable forum for the discussion and, where necessary, the promotion, of social change.

15. WFUNA warmly welcomed the Secretary-General's plans to launch a number of United Nations multinational interdisciplinary development advisory teams in 1970. In view, however, of the similarity between that scheme and IBRD's plan for a new and expanded programme of country economic missions, consideration might be given to the desirability of merging the two plans to form single joint teams as tools within the framework of the regional economic commissions, to be used jointly by the United Nations and IBRD.

16. WFUNA also suggested that consideration should be given to the planning of incentives with a view to enlisting the enthusiastic co-operation of the populations concerned and associating them with both the preparation and the implementation of plans, and that, for that purpose, each team should include a suitably qualified sociologist.

17. Another suggestion he would like to make was that the regional economic commissions should initiate conferences to discuss regional machinery for the co-ordination and appraisal of aid, both multilateral and bilateral, the har-

monization of aid in relation to trade and investment, and the provision of annual reviews of the development performance of recipients. Regional development banks might be invited to participate in that process within the framework of the regional economic commissions, which could thus provide co-ordinating and reporting services as executing agents of UNDP. Country programming should be the subject of review by the regional economic commissions to ensure harmonization with regional and sub-regional interests.

18. In connexion with the proposal by the Governing Council of UNDP in paragraph 57 of the annex to the draft resolution recommended for action by the Economic and Social Council (see E/4884, para. 94) that regional bureaux should be established at the headquarters level to provide a direct link between the Administrator and the UNDP Resident Representatives, he would like to suggest that the regional economic commissions might themselves constitute the bureaux, for the pivot of each region's development should be situated in the region concerned. He hoped, however, that the investigation proposed in Sir Robert Jackson's report, *A Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System*<sup>1</sup> and endorsed by the UNDP Governing Council at its recent session would be treated as a matter of some urgency.

19. Lastly, he wished to say that WFUNA strongly endorsed the view expressed in paragraph 6 of the report of the meetings of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions. The commissions should be central to the main current of United Nations development assistance within their regions.

20. Mr. PETROV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation was in general agreement with the views of preceding speakers about the activities of the regional economic commissions, which were important organs of the United Nations. For many years, the regional economic commissions had given indisputable proof that they played an important role in the economic development of the different regions of the world and, at the same time, contributed to the creation of an atmosphere of confidence and of good neighbourliness among States. The Council should, therefore, continue to encourage and help their activities.

21. As a European country, Bulgaria was interested, and participated actively, in the activities of ECE, on some aspects of whose work he would comment.

22. His delegation highly valued ECE as the only European body providing for co-operation in fundamental economic fields between European countries with different social and economic systems. It noted with satisfaction that multilateral co-operation in the economic, scientific and technical fields was widening and was taking on new forms within the framework of the Commission.

23. A characteristic trait of ECE's work was the effort it made, in conformity with the changes and requirements of European economic realities, to find a way out of economic

immobility and to discover practical solutions for many important problems of European co-operation.

24. In accordance with that trend, the structure, forms and methods of work of ECE had been re-organized with a view to greater efficiency. His delegation particularly appreciated the fact that ECE was not confining itself to traditional fields of work, but was encouraging activities in new fields opened up by the evolution of European economic life.

25. His delegation welcomed the long-term economic research activities, which were of great practical importance to the Governments of member States when taking policy decisions relating to the planning of development in the different sectors of the economy and in international economic relations. His delegation also considered that the method of long-term research could be applied to other branches of the Commission's work.

26. He fully approved the idea of discussing, at each session of ECE, one main topic of common interest to the European countries.

27. The Executive Secretary's analytical report on the state of intra-European trade provided a good basis for the discussion of that subject. He hoped that the dialogue which had been initiated on the problems of intra-European trade would result in practical measures and the elimination of political, administrative and other obstacles to the expansion of East-West trade.

28. His delegation supported ECE's work in the field of scientific and technical co-operation. It was of the opinion that a second Meeting of Governmental Experts on Technological Co-operation should be convened to consider and adopt a programme, and the forms and methods, of future work in that field; the time had come to put such work on a permanent basis.

29. The Commission's interest in problems of the environment was also commendable: he was sure that the results of the ECE Conference on Problems relating to Environment to be held at Prague in 1971 would be a valuable contribution to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment to be held at Stockholm in 1972.

30. ECE had achieved significant results in other, more conventional, fields as well, in which the possibilities of expanding co-operation between European countries were far from exhausted.

31. The interests of ECE, as well as those of European peace and security would, he was profoundly convinced, be well served by the convening of a conference of all European States on problems of security and economic, scientific and technical co-operation, as proposed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the countries members of the Warsaw Pact.

32. His delegation deeply regretted that the problem of the participation of the German Democratic Republic in ECE's work had once again remained unsolved. It was difficult to understand how a policy of discrimination could be maintained against that highly-industrialized sovereign European State, which had been a factor in the peace and stability of Europe and in the world for over twenty

<sup>1</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.70.I.10.

years, and which maintained diplomatic relations with twenty-six countries. The German Democratic Republic had clearly demonstrated its support of the principles of the United Nations Charter and its will to co-operate in the solution of serious economic and social problems. Its participation in ECE's work would not only improve the political climate in Europe but also help to bring about normal relations between the two German States. Despite the Council's rejection of the draft resolution on the subject submitted by Bulgaria, the People's Republic of the Congo, Sudan and the USSR (E/L.1336), his delegation was convinced that the problem of the participation of the German Democratic Republic in the work of ECE, as well as in that of other United Nations bodies, could not be delayed much longer if friendly and peaceful relations were to be established in Europe and throughout the world.

33. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) said he had listened with great interest to the statements of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions and to the statement made by the Director of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut. There still seemed to be some uncertainty about what the various commissions should do. It might not always be necessary or desirable for them all to follow the same course. ECE had already taken a constructive line of its own, and in view of the diversity of the various regions it might be useful for others to do the same.

34. He had some difficulty in understanding the last paragraph of the preamble and paragraph 1 of the operative part of the draft resolution submitted by Chad, Ghana, Kenya, People's Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Tunisia (E/L.1335 and Corr.1). The terms of ECA resolution 188 (IX) did not seem to justify the contention that the members of the Executive Committee attended in their individual capacity. The annex to that resolution described the Executive Committee as consisting, *inter alia*, of the Chairman, the two Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of the session of the Conference of Ministers. A Minister attending a United Nations meeting must, almost by definition, do so as a representative of his government. The membership also included two representatives from each sub-region, two African members of the Economic and Social Council and two members of the Governing Council of UNDP, one in each case representing the English-speaking countries and one the French-speaking countries, who, as representatives, could scarcely be attending in their personal capacity. It was further stipulated that no one country could have more than one representative on the Executive Committee. Unless, therefore, the Secretariat could show that his interpretation was incorrect, his delegation would find it very difficult to support the two paragraphs in question.

35. He welcomed the offer of the Government of Thailand — mentioned in draft resolution E/L.1338 — to make available additional land for the construction of ECAFE headquarters. His delegation would support the draft resolution, together with the ECAFE recommendation that the Territory of Papua and New Guinea should be admitted as an associate member of the Commission.

36. He welcomed the fact that the ECAFE work programme had been set out in accordance with the priority classification in Council resolution 1367 (XLV).

37. In a region as large as Asia and the Far East, the performance evaluation to which reference was made in ECAFE resolution 106 (XXVI) could best be carried out at the subregional level. The matter should be considered when the whole question of review and appraisal during the Second United Nations Development Decade came up for consideration by the Economic Committee. The Council should not be too eager to endorse such a draft resolution by one particular regional economic commission at the present stage.

38. He proposed that the Council should refer to the Co-ordination Committee the question of the review of regional and subregional structures, in accordance with the recommendation of the Governing Council of UNDP, in paragraph 67 of the annex to the draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (see E/4884, para. 94). Many questions of detail would have to be considered in that connexion in close consultation with all the appropriate bodies in the United Nations system. The matter would, of course, be referred back to plenary with the Co-ordination Committee's recommendations and observations.

39. The meetings of the executive secretaries were valuable, and the report on them would be useful in the discussion of a number of items on the Council's agenda. His delegation welcomed in particular the drafting of the section of the United Nations export promotion efforts.

40. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) observed that there was general agreement on the vital importance of the problem under consideration to the success of any development programme for the 1970s. The experience of the developing countries following their accession to political independence showed ever more clearly that the problems of under-development could not be solved within exclusively national programmes. One of the unfortunate results of colonization had been the frontier disputes and other divisions to which it had given rise and which had induced the countries most in need of mobilizing their internal resources for development to use them for the purchase of war materials. Such conflicts had developed to some extent throughout the third world and had led in many cases to grave armed conflict from which the armaments industries of the developed countries had profited. Colonization had also caused rifts which in reality had nothing to do with conditions in the developing countries themselves but had their origin in certain developed countries. Such rifts had greatly prejudiced regional co-operation and prevented its normal development. One of the most unfortunate consequences had been that many developing countries had had to carry out vast industrial projects at a cost out of all proportion to their internal economic capacity or export possibilities.

41. His country had succeeded in overcoming those problems through the farsightedness of the leaders of the Maghreb countries, which had been able to base their



co-operation on firm and lasting foundations. The frontier difficulties between Tunisia and Algeria on the one hand and Algeria and Morocco on the other had been settled, and there had also been a reconciliation between Morocco and Mauritania which would allow fruitful co-operation between the two countries. The Maghreb leaders had thus been able to prepare the way for co-operation on a sound basis. Regional co-operation had also been promoted in similar ways elsewhere in the third world. The means for bringing it about should be strengthened.

42. The regional economic commissions had once again made great and imaginative efforts in many different fields of activity. ECA had proved to be one of the best instruments for promoting African co-operation. It had given the Standing Consultative Committee of the Maghreb the fullest possible support in accomplishing its many and varied tasks.

43. He welcomed the fact that the Council had taken note of the unanimous decision of the African countries to accept his Government's invitation to hold the tenth session of ECA at Tunis. He was confident that the United Nations Secretariat would co-operate fully with the Tunisian Government on that occasion. On the eve of the Second United Nations Development Decade, regional co-operation would become increasingly important. The regional economic commissions would have an ever more important role to play in the success of the strategy, both in the formulation of national development plans and in the periodic evaluation of those plans.

44. Mr. WILLIAMS (International Monetary Fund) said that IMF had for many years played an active role in members' efforts to accelerate their economic growth through regional co-operation. Well conceived and properly implemented plans for such co-operation did not necessarily conflict with the principles of a free, non-discriminatory international payments system. Indeed, by promoting more rapid progress for the participants, such co-operation could lead to more fruitful economic interchange among all nations.

45. The need for carefully formulated regional monetary plans that were practical and consistent with the purposes of international monetary co-operation as embodied in the Articles of Agreement of IMF was now fairly generally recognized. Governments now had no desire to subscribe to regional schemes that might lead to discriminatory practices or away from convertibility. Regional payments schemes were of two basic types; a simple clearing union for offsetting mutual claims, and a regional stabilization fund for financing balance-of-payments deficits and supporting currency convertibility. IMF had supported such schemes in Central and South America, and was at present collaborating with ECAFE in devising monetary co-operation schemes which would perhaps start at the subregional level.

46. Mr. ABDEIMOU (Chad) said that ECA would view the proposal in draft resolution E/L.1335 as a means of promoting co-operation and understanding and improved economic development. A member of a particular government serving on the Executive Committee was a represen-

tative, not of that government, but of the region as a whole. It was necessary to appoint members of governments because there were not enough experts for the purpose in all the African countries. It was regrettable that representatives of some of the major Powers in the Council were trying to reduce ECA's effectiveness. Economic co-operation was a matter of great importance for Africa's development efforts, particularly in the context of the Second United Nations Development Decade. The draft resolution should command the support of all members.

47. Mr. RAMAYON (Argentina) said that ECLA and the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning had an important part to play in the development of Latin America. His delegation wished to express its support for those two regional bodies and for resolution 296 (AC.62) adopted by the Committee of the Whole of ECLA at its fifth extraordinary session (see E/4806, part III).

48. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece), referring to his earlier comments concerning the problems of the less developed countries of Europe, said that he had since observed in the report of ECE that ECE had been very active in that connexion. The Executive Secretary's note on the Commission's contribution to the United Nations programmes designed to assist less developed countries (E/ECE/757) also described activities in that sector.

49. With reference to the comments of the Executive Secretary of ECE concerning East-West trade (1697th meeting), he said that the difference in economic systems was perhaps one of the main obstacles to such trade. His country's trade with Poland, which before the Second World War had been one of its main trading partners, was now limited because of the trading systems of the eastern European countries. Trade between countries with a free-market economy and those with trade monopolies was difficult. If the systems had been similar, there might have been a tremendous outflow from the western European countries, with their more sophisticated industries, to the eastern European countries.

50. Not enough material was available to make a full comparison of trading systems possible or to establish what factors were really responsible for impeding East-West trade.

51. But for commodity restrictions, there could have been a North/South trade flow into eastern Europe, for example through Yugoslavia, Greece or Turkey. Perhaps the Executive Secretary could raise such questions with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Development of Trade, who, in consultation with European countries, might throw more light on the important question of intra-European trade.

52. His delegation regretted that the report of the meetings of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions had not been issued earlier. He hoped that at future sessions such reports would be made available to delegations at least ten days before the item was discussed.

53. Parts of the general conclusions of the report, particularly paragraph 4, were cryptic. He assumed that the term

“other factors”, in the sixth line of that paragraph, referred to political factors, but it would have been as well to be specific. Paragraph 10 was also far from clear. There should perhaps have been some discussion with the executive secretaries. He suggested that, in future, the executive secretaries should circulate their first comments in written form and then discuss specific questions on their more detailed reports. Such a procedure might make it possible for members to make more constructive comments.

54. Mr. ALZAMORA TRAVERSO (Peru) said that his delegation agreed with the conclusion in the report of ECLA (E/4806). During the period under review, ECLA had continued to be the main body for identifying economic and social problems of the region, establishing objectives and priorities and training personnel to carry out development programmes. The Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning had made a decisive contribution in ensuring the efficiency and continuity of the planning process. His delegation particularly welcomed resolution 296 (AC.62) of the fifth extraordinary session of the ECLA Committee of the Whole. Experience had repeatedly shown the validity of ECLA forecasts. The situation in Latin America might have been better if the Commission's warnings and far-sighted recommendations had been heeded in good time. There had now been a new endeavour to prepare the region to face up to the internal and external problems hampering its development.

55. ECLA had responded readily and efficiently to the recent earthquake disaster in his country. A mission of experts had arrived on the spot within a matter of hours to help the Government to assess the damage and the immediate needs, as well as to prepare plans for reconstruction and rehabilitation in the devastated areas. The support given by ECLA at the sixth extraordinary session of its Committee of the Whole deserved special thanks. His Government relied on the Commission's continued co-operation in the task of development and reconstruction.

56. Mr. STANOVNIK (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Europe) said he wished to offer a brief clarification of a point in his introductory statement which had been mentioned by the representative of Greece, who had referred to differences in social and economic systems as being a major obstacle to trade. In the case of the East-West trade flow in Europe, there were many obstacles, but the main question was, essentially, whether a country had money to buy imports or commodities to sell with which it could obtain foreign exchange. Any other obstacles were somewhat immaterial. The exports of the socialist countries were not sufficiently diversified for them to be able to earn the foreign currency they required. The demand for their traditional exports was insufficiently elastic. All other obstacles were rather theoretical.

57. In the ECE report for 1970, it had been decided to ignore theoretical considerations and highlight practical and pragmatic ones. That did not mean that institutional differences presented no problem, but his Commission felt that the first priority was to remove the actual difficulties encountered in practice.

58. The PRESIDENT said that, the debate on item 6 (a) and (b) having been concluded, he would put to the vote the various draft resolutions before the Council.

59. For ECE, the Council had before it a draft resolution in part IV of the Commission's annual report (E/4822). If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council adopted the draft resolution.

*The draft resolution was adopted.*

60. The PRESIDENT said that, so far as ECAFE was concerned, the Council would recall that he had suggested a draft resolution concerning the ECAFE headquarters site and building extension programme (E/L.1338). If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council adopted the draft resolution.

*The draft resolution was adopted.*

61. The PRESIDENT said that, in addition, there were two draft resolutions for action by the Council in part IV of the annual report of ECAFE (E/4823). If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council adopted the first of the two draft resolutions.

*The first of the two draft resolutions was adopted.*

62. The PRESIDENT said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Council adopted the second of the two draft resolutions.

63. Mr. POJARSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he had no objection to the Council's taking note of the recommendations and resolutions contained in the report of ECAFE, provided it was fully understood that no increase in the regular budget of the United Nations would be involved, and that the recommendations could be implemented by re-deploying staff.

64. The PRESIDENT said that that reservation would be noted.

*Subject to that reservation, the second draft resolution in the annual report of ECAFE was adopted.*

65. The PRESIDENT said that, so far as concerned ECLA, the Council had before it a draft resolution in part IV of the annual report of that Commission (E/4806). If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council adopted the draft resolution.

*The draft resolution was adopted.*

66. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council might adopt the following draft resolution concerning the report of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut:

*“The Economic and Social Council,*

*“Takes note of the annual report on the activities of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut covering the period 1 May 1969 to 15 April 1970 (E/4825).”*

*The draft resolution was adopted.*

67. The PRESIDENT suggested a draft resolution regarding the report of ECA as follows:

*"The Economic and Social Council,*

*"Takes note of the annual report of the Economic Commission for Africa covering the period 15 February 1969 to 14 February 1970 (E/4824)."*

If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council adopted the draft resolution.

*The draft resolution was adopted.*

68. The PRESIDENT said that a further draft resolution before the Council was that submitted by Chad, Ghana, Kenya, People's Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Tunisia (E/L.1335 and Corr.1.) He drew the Council's attention to the revised statement of administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution (E/L.1337/Rev.1).

69. Mr. ASANTE (Ghana) said he was rather embarrassed at taking the floor to introduce a draft resolution on a simple administrative matter. Whenever money was mentioned, however, difficulties and numerous misunderstandings seemed to arise.

70. The Technical Committee of Experts was a Committee of the Whole, and no financial implications were involved.

71. As to the Executive Committee set up under resolution 188 (IX) of ECA, that was a group of persons elected in their individual capacities to assist the Executive Secretary. It had been suggested that, since some of the members of that Executive Committee were Ministers in their respective countries, they could not be regarded as attending in their individual capacities. That was not the mode of thinking in Africa. The continent was currently dominated by two civilizations – the Anglo-Saxon and the French – and it was necessary to appoint experts from both linguistic groups, for otherwise the advice given would not be representative.

72. At meeting after meeting of United Nations bodies, it was stated that every attempt should be made to improve regional co-operation. The Executive Committee had been established to deal with some of the problems involved in improving regional co-operation. It would, of course, have been possible to invite the countries from which the experts came to bear the expenses, but that would have meant that only the wealthier countries could supply such experts.

73. In accordance with normal United Nations practice, therefore, the members of the Executive Committee were appointed in their individual capacities and not as representatives of their Governments.

74. In order to meet some of the suggestions put forward, he was able, on behalf of the sponsors, to accept certain amendments. In operative paragraph 1, he was willing to insert the words "as soon as their appointments have been ratified by the Commission" after the word "Committee" in the fourth line. In operative paragraph 2, he wished to make an insertion for the sake of clarity: the word "or" in the third line of that paragraph should be replaced by the words "and to the Chairman or Rapporteur of". Consequently, it would be necessary to amend the last clause of

that paragraph to read "to submit the reports of their Committees to the bodies to which they are responsible".

75. If any further objections were raised, or clarifications sought, the sponsors were perfectly willing to discuss the draft resolution unofficially.

76. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) said that, as a co-sponsor of the draft resolution, his delegation fully endorsed the introduction by the representative of Ghana.

77. At the ninth session of ECA, the various Governments had insisted that the secretariat should play a more significant role in the future. The two committees in question – the Technical Committee of Experts and the Executive Committee – had been established to help it to do so. The African countries expected the United Nations to give all possible assistance to those committees.

78. Mr. POJARSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said his delegation found itself in a difficult situation. It wanted to assist the work of ECA, and the actual money involved was not a serious consideration. There were difficulties, however, of a purely formal nature. He had grave doubts concerning the legality of the decision that the Council was being called upon to take. He did not think that the Economic and Social Council was a suitable forum, and suggested that the views of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the matter should first be ascertained. In fact, he thought it was a decision that should be submitted to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. Otherwise, there was a danger of creating an unfortunate precedent.

79. If the members of the Executive Committee came under operative paragraph 2 (a) of General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII), there was no problem and no point in the draft resolution. If, however, they did not, there were some very serious questions of principle involved.

80. The representative of the United Kingdom had clearly demonstrated that the members of the Executive Committee must be regarded, not as experts serving in an individual personal capacity but as representatives of governments. If there were some doubts concerning the definition of experts, he was not sure that it was a question that the Council was capable of settling.

81. So far as concerned the Chairman or Rapporteur of the Committee, payment was provided for under operative paragraph 3 (b) (i) of General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII), and the reference to operative paragraph 2 (b) (i) in the draft resolution was therefore incorrect.

82. His delegation would propose that the Council should take no action on the draft resolution until the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had given its views. At that juncture, the draft resolution, together with the comments of the Advisory Committee, should be submitted to the Fifth Committee direct. That appeared to be a more appropriate procedure.

83. Mr. CHTOUROU (Tunisia) said that, in fact, the draft resolution was directed to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.

84. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said that, when recommendations concerning the strengthening and reorganization of ECA had been before the Council in 1969, his delegation had strongly supported them in accordance with its general conviction that the decentralization of operations, and their efficiency and qualitative improvement, would thereby be assisted. The draft resolution under discussion faced the Council with a choice not between supporting or not supporting that reorganization, but with a critical dilemma with respect to the role and function of the Executive Committee. It was a long-standing tradition to encourage the representatives of governments to function more responsibly within the arena of the United Nations, as a more vigorous application of the programme and more responsible representation were thus ensured.

85. He had read with some care the provision which described the nature and functions of the Executive Committee and had been struck by what appeared to be an inconsistency between the provisions put to the Council at its forty-seventh session and the proposal contained in the present draft resolution, which would indicate that the members of the Executive Committee were functioning in their individual capacities. As described in the annex to ECA resolution 188 (IX), the functions of the Executive Committee were clearly representational. For example, it was stated in that annex that the function of the Executive Committee was "to provide a link between the secretariat, member States and the sub-regions". Experts were not normally thought of as links. The reason why they were called experts was in fact to afford them a degree of objectivity and separation from governments and political influences.

86. His delegation had taken the composition of the Executive Committee to be so designed as to link the work of ECA more responsibly with the Governments and regions of Africa. That was an important objective, which his delegation welcomed. The representative capacity of the members of the Executive Committee had been further stressed in the description of the Committee's composition. Moreover, the Executive Secretary had explicitly stated in connexion with the financial implications of the commemorative resolutions adopted by ECA at its ninth session, "As the members of the Executive Committee would be representatives of member States, their travel and subsistence as well as their local transportation needs would be the responsibility of the respective Governments".<sup>2</sup> That could hardly be more explicit, and his delegation believed that that concept of an Executive Committee linked to governments, responsibly representing regions and fully providing the interconnexion between the work of ECA and the will and participation of Governments was administratively and functionally sound.

87. That description, however, was not compatible with the provision of the draft resolution now before the Council, calling upon the United Nations to provide travel and subsistence expenses for the Committee's members on

the grounds that they were not representatives of governments but persons acting in their individual capacities.

88. Perhaps the intention on which the Council had acted in 1969 no longer represented the judgement of ECA, or the conception of the Executive Committee had perhaps changed since then. In that case, it might be advisable to refer the matter back to ECA for a clear and definitive recommendation on the matter. His delegation had no difficulty so far as the Rapporteur of the Technical Committee of Experts was concerned, but thought it inappropriate or even irresponsible for the Council, after reviewing and acting on the documents containing recommendations, to take action which contradicted its understanding of the organization of the Executive Committee.

89. He would therefore request the sponsors to refer paragraph 1 of the operative part and the third paragraph of the preamble back to ECA for clarification. He did not think that would unduly retard the progress of the Committee, since ECA would hold its next session in January 1971 and only one meeting would be affected. The Commission could then submit a definitive recommendation to the Council in 1971.

90. Mr. ASANTE (Ghana) said that the statement read out by the representative of the United States of America had been superseded by the later draft resolution. It was clear, however, that the Executive Committee had not been established to take advantage of operative paragraph 2 (a) of General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII). The African countries had revised their ideas in the light of the realities encountered.

91. As to the suggestion by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that the question should be referred to the Advisory Committee, that would be tantamount to going back to the beginning. It was his own delegation's view that payment should be made to the members of the Executive Committee as a matter of course, under the appropriate Council and General Assembly resolutions. Since, however, there seemed to be some doubt about it, his delegation and others had sponsored the current draft resolution, regarding the matter as a very trivial one.

92. Since so much opposition had been encountered from some of the main contributors to the United Nations budget, the sponsors, being realists, would not seek a vote at the present time. They would consult together and re-submit the draft resolution later. There were many more ways of killing a resolution than voting against it.

93. Mr. OLDS (United States of America) said his delegation was not concerned with the comparatively small amount of money involved but with an important question of principle concerning the functioning of the United Nations. It was the general view of most delegations that the United Nations budget should not carry the expenses of the representatives of governments. In practice, it was not always easy to draw the line between representatives of governments and persons acting as experts in their personal

<sup>2</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-seventh Session*, document E/4651, para. 399.



capacities. The members of the Executive Committee, however, clearly seemed to be representatives. In the circumstances, their respective governments must meet their expenses.

94. ECA was perfectly entitled to change its structure, including that of the Executive Committee, but if the Council were to act responsibly in the matter, a new draft resolution was required. The Council would find itself in deep water if it approved the resolution in its current form.

95. Mr. CHTOUROU (Tunisia) said he supported the suggestion made by the representative of Ghana that the draft resolution should be deferred for further and more detailed consideration by the sponsors, in the light of all the objections which had been raised.

96. The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council was not ready to reach a decision on the draft resolution, which

would be deferred until the next plenary meeting of the Council. He also believed that consultations were in progress concerning other draft resolutions under agenda items 6 (a) and 6 (b), and he suggested that, if there were no objections, a time-limit should be set for the submission of draft resolutions. A suitable time-limit would be the afternoon of 20 July 1970.

*It was so agreed.*

97. The PRESIDENT recalled that the representative of the United Kingdom had suggested that it might be preferable for the recommendation by the Governing Council of UNDP regarding an inquiry into the problems of regional and subregional structures to be discussed in the Co-ordination Committee.

*It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.