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President: Mr. MARAMIS (Indonesia)

AGENDA ITEM 6

Regional co-operation

- (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/L.1335 and Corr.1, E/L.1336-1338)
- (b) Report on the meetings of the executive secretaries (E/4859)

1. The PRESIDENT said that, as the Council had decided to refer sub-item 6 (c) to the Co-ordination Committee, only sub-items 6 (a) and 6 (b) would be discussed in plenary.

2. Members wishing to comment on item 6 (c) in plenary would have an opportunity to do so during the examination of the report of the meetings of the Executive Secretaries (E/4859), which contained a special section devoted to the progress report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2563 (XXIV) relating to United Nations multi-national interdisciplinary development advisory teams.

3. He also wished to announce that the Governing Council of UNDP had just decided to invite the Economic and Social Council to make an immediate inquiry into the problems of regional and subregional structures within the United Nations system which had a bearing on the improvement of the capacity of the United Nations development system. Members of the Economic and Social Council might wish to give their views on that decision.

4. Mr. STANOVNIK (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Europe), introducing the report of ECE (E/4822 and E/4822/Summary), said that a key fact emerged from the report, namely, that in the European region the development of science and technology had contributed to economic growth more than any other single

factor, and had also had the greatest influence on the economic and social environment. Expenditure by ECE member countries on research and development amounted to \$50,000 million annually or more than the total annual income of a country such as India. Such expenditure was increasing at the rate of 10 per cent a year, a higher rate than in any other sector of economic or social life. Two million scientists and highly trained engineers were at present engaged in research and development and their number was growing at the rate of 8 per cent a year, or more rapidly than the labour force in any other sector of the economy. A genuine revolution was thus in progress, with all the beneficial and adverse consequences which that might entail in all spheres of the region's economic and social life, and particularly in trade and the human environment.

5. Where the beneficial aspects were concerned, it must be emphasized that science by its nature was a creative human activity which was by implication universal in character. The application of science to production was mainly a question of harnessing natural forces through systematic research and thinking. The member countries of ECE, as their use of science and technology increased, were becoming aware of the degree to which they were dependent on one another; their economic policies were becoming more and more outward-looking and were inevitably moving towards internationalization, particularly in the field of trade. Thus, intra-European trade had increased very rapidly, about twice as fast as production, indicating that the technological factor was so powerful that it had broken through all political and ideological barriers.

6. But the application of science and technology also had adverse consequences, especially for the human environment. Since the aim was to harness natural forces throughout the world, the adverse effects were also becoming increasingly international respecting no frontiers and making close international co-operation indispensable.

7. Against that general background, ECE had recently broadened its work programmes considerably, particularly in 1969, as a result, among other things, of a marked improvement in the political climate throughout the region. It was well known that important negotiations were in progress in many places in Europe, and ECE attached a great importance to them. All the countries of the region recognized that economic co-operation did much not only to narrow the differences between them, but also to create greater confidence, an essential factor for the peace and security of the region. The Commission was at present virtually the only universal European body that covered almost all spheres of economic and social activity. At its twenty-fifth session, important diplomatic efforts had been made to overcome the political differences and solve the

problem of universality often mentioned by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The failure of those negotiations had been brought about more by legal and constitutional difficulties than by any lack of goodwill. It was therefore to be hoped that a solution would eventually be reached.

8. Where intra-European trade was concerned, reference should be made to some particularly important new developments brought about by the influence of scientific and technological factors. It was in trade that international co-operation could be measured in statistical terms. Thus, during the past fifteen years, intra-European trade had grown so rapidly that its share of total European trade had risen from 62 to 71 per cent. In that context, reference should also be made to the growth of East-West trade, which had grown at an average annual rate of 12 per cent during the past two decades, in spite of the fact that important questions of principle concerning trade relationships between countries with different social and economic systems had not yet been solved.

9. Concerned by the gravity of those problems and by the dangers they might hold for the future, the ECE countries had asked him to prepare an analytical report on the state of intra-European trade. That report (E/ECE/761 and Add.1), presented to the Commission at its last session, made the important point that the main differences affecting East-West trade did not relate to social and economic systems but rather to the commodity structure of trade. The report found that while the eastbound trade flow was largely technology-biased, the westbound trade flow was mainly primary-product-biased. He had not been instructed to make recommendations on the basis of the study, but certain conclusions were implicit in it. In particular, the report threw light on recent developments in the economy and trade, and on the fact that trade was becoming increasingly linked with production. It was especially interesting to note the integration movement in western Europe (exemplified by the existence of multinational companies) and the co-operation movement in eastern Europe (exemplified by industrial branch agreements), and the way in which those movements were contributing to the development of trade between socialist and capitalist countries. It was clear that industrial co-operation could help to solve many problems. Another conclusion that seemed to emerge from the report was that the traditional concept of reciprocity of concessions was perhaps not always applicable to countries with different social and economic systems. The actual and directly comparable results achieved in trade were far more important than the formal concessions themselves. The report therefore implicitly recommended that a comprehensive strategy should be considered, comprising "positive" trade-promotional measures as well as "negative" measures such as the removal of obstacles to trade. It was now for Governments to decide which of the complex issues linked to the choice of a strategy for promoting world trade should be given priority.

10. With regard to the possible adverse consequences of modern scientific and technological progress, ECE was

concentrating its attention on those which affected the human environment. It had long been undertaking work in that field, work which would inevitably be stimulated by the awakening of public opinion. Water and air had long not been regarded as resources properly so-called, as both had appeared to be practically inexhaustible. It had only recently been recognized that there were limits to the pollution which the atmosphere could absorb. Similarly, hydrocarbons had long been thought to be cleaner than other fuels, but it was now known that their combustion absorbed oxygen and charged the atmosphere with noxious gases. Research workers had drawn attention to many other similar facts and the member countries of ECE were becoming increasingly concerned at the effects on the human environment of modern technical processes, which were mainly activities with a high energy consumption. Already in 1967, ECE had drawn up plans for a regional conference on that subject; that conference would be held in May 1971. At the Commission's last session, it had also been decided that another meeting of high-level governmental experts should be held in November 1970 for the purpose of studying government policies and agencies concerned with the environment. Many problems connected with the human environment were under constant consideration as part of the regular activities of ECE, in particular by the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, the Inland Transport Committee, the Steel Committee and various other bodies. A number of seminars had been arranged on such problems. The Commission was giving increasing attention to the multidisciplinary aspect of environmental problems. It was obvious that some of those problems were inherently very general in character and could not be solved simply by co-operation at the regional level: examples were questions relating to weather forecasting, the resources of the sea, etc., questions which, it was to be hoped, would be taken up by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. All those activities were of the utmost importance to all countries, as it was on the basis of the experience of the developed countries that the problem could be solved. The member countries of ECE therefore had a duty not only to supply information but also to put forward practical solutions in that field.

11. With regard to the organization of the Commission's activities, its structure should obviously be as flexible as possible in view of the new problems which were constantly arising. He had already informed the Council the previous year¹ of the main lines of the reorganization plan, which had since been approved as a whole by the Commission's subsidiary bodies. With the progress of technology, it was becoming evident that it was not the Governments which possessed the necessary technological knowledge, but the major industrial undertakings. Seminars providing for collaboration between private enterprise and Governments were therefore preferable to working parties or other purely governmental meetings. Experiments on those lines had already been made within ECE and very satisfactory results had been achieved. It was also very clear that questions had

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-seventh Session, 1614th meeting.*

to be approached from a number of angles. Technical co-operation in ECE mainly took place in its subordinate bodies, whose activities must be rearranged so that the problems could be studied at a multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral level.

12. At its last session, the Commission had instructed him to define for each annual session of the Commission one or more priority topics, and to prepare a report on the Commission's activities, paying special attention to the priority topics selected. His next annual report would deal more particularly with structural changes in European industry. One reason for that choice was that industrial specialization had undoubtedly been one of the most important factors in the expansion of trade. Attention would also have to be given to the emergence of a new industry, that of electronic equipment (computers, etc.), which now occupied third place immediately after the automobile industry and the iron and steel industry.

13. He had been particularly gratified by the offers of collaboration in preparing that study received from the specialized agencies of the United Nations, in particular UNIDO and UNCTAD. A number of co-ordination problems would certainly have to be solved. It seemed preferable, moreover, to speak of co-operation, a term which suggested action rather than words. As ECE activities developed in new priority fields, there would be a parallel organization of co-operation with other United Nations bodies. As a regional commission whose activities extended to almost all fields, ECE had to collaborate with other bodies, both at the regional and country level, in carrying out the programmes which had been decided upon. It thus co-operated closely with FAO, with which it had two joint divisions, with UNESCO, with which many joint meetings had been organized (including recently a Conference of European Ministers responsible for Science Policy), with WHO on environmental questions, with IAEA and with the secretariats of OECD and CMEA.

14. In conclusion, he stressed that co-operation at the European level could have an enormous impact on the course of the Second Development Decade, as Europe controlled nearly 90 per cent of the resources devoted to research in the world and 75 per cent of world exports, and all developments in that region inevitably affected the rest of the world economy.

15. U NYUN (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East) said he had already had the opportunity under agenda item 2 (1699th meeting) of reporting on the economic situation in Asia and the Far East and of referring to the ECAFE Declaration contained in resolution 103 (XXVI) adopted at the twenty-sixth session, in which the Commission expressed the common will of member countries to take concerted action to solve the problems of the region, listed the achievements of a number of bodies it had established, together with the programmes relating to trade promotion, trade liberalization and monetary co-operation, and stressed the part to be played by the Commission in charting a regional development strategy and the necessity of decentralization

measures, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2563 (XXIV).

16. That Declaration gave a true picture of the Commission's work in preparing future plans for a balanced development of the region, including a programme of trade liberalization and of payments arrangements. The Commission had also begun to place heavy emphasis on population problems and its annual *Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East* would lay greater stress on social change and the importance of youth. At the country level, some basic changes in orientation were to be noted; there was no doubt that the establishment of interdisciplinary advisory teams constituted a new phase in country work and, together with the programmes at the regional and subregional level, would enable the Second Development Decade to become a decade of implementation.

17. The Council would find in the Commission's annual report (E/4823) a sufficiently detailed account of the various projects and activities undertaken by the Commission during the past year, most of which had related to industrial development.

18. He wished to express the Commission's thanks for the assistance given by several international organizations, particularly UNCTAD, IMF and GATT, in drawing up a programme of regional trade liberalization and payment arrangements, in accordance with the strategy adopted by the Council of Ministers for regional economic co-operation in December 1968. The success of the second Asian International Trade Fair, held at Teheran in the autumn of 1969, had led the Commission to accept the offer of the Indian Government to hold the third International Fair at New Delhi in 1972. The Commission and ITU were pursuing their co-operation on the preinvestment surveys for the Asian Telecommunication Network. The Asian Highway project continued to receive a high priority in the development plans of the countries concerned. With regard to statistics, the most important development had been the election of the members of the Advisory Council of the Asian Statistical Institute. The social situation in Asia had been the subject of a study for inclusion in the *Report on the World Social Situation, 1970*, while the Commission had adopted at its last session resolution 111 (XXVI), calling upon its members to adopt effective measures for the achievement of population equilibrium. A Public Administration Unit had been set up in the Commission's secretariat in order to meet the region's requirements in that field more systematically and to enhance the level of administrative services, while the Commission had adopted resolution 112 (XXVI), concerning the establishment of a regional centre for development administration. The most important of the existing regional projects was undoubtedly the Mekong development project undertaken under the direction of the Committee for Co-ordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin and financed by contributions from the riparian and other countries, sixteen United Nations agencies and other organizations; discussions would be necessary with several international banks with a view to the long-term continuation of the project. The Asian Development Bank, which played a vital part in the economic growth of Asia, was taking an

increasing interest in the Commission's many projects in the field of regional co-operation, and the Asian Institute for Economic Development and Planning had entered upon its second phase of operations covering the years 1970 to 1973.

19. With regard to the coming years, the Commission's work programme was in three parts (the programme of work, a time-table of projects, and long-term planning proposals, including Second Development Decade perspectives). The programme gave a clear indication of the priorities and gave the distribution of man-months for each project. The resources traditionally came from the regular budget and from the regular and expanded programmes of technical assistance for regional projects. In view of the new orientation of the Commission's work, increasing reliance had had to be placed on extra-budgetary resources and the Commission was very grateful for the assistance given by the United Nations, its specialized agencies and UNDP. In its report to the Council the Commission had provided statements of the financial implications of the projects with the highest priority, and it hoped that the assistance needed for its important activities of a highly practical nature would be forthcoming in full.

20. The problems of the ECAFE region were numerous and complex, but increasingly active regional co-operation and international assistance were facilitating their solution. It was encouraging that the activities which the Commission had been pursuing through the years had now reached the point where they could accelerate economic and social development in the context of the wider international co-operation which was the aim of the United Nations.

21. Mr. QUINTANA (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Latin America) said that the Committee of the Whole of the Commission had recently held two extraordinary sessions. The fifth extraordinary session had been held early in May 1970 to consider the financing of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES); in that connexion, the Committee had adopted resolution 296 (AC.62) in which it had urged the Secretary-General of the United Nations to seek to provide for the continuity and permanence of the Institute, ensuring that it would continue its essential activities in Latin America during the Second Development Decade, and had requested UNDP to provide the necessary financing on appropriate terms. The sixth extraordinary session of the Committee of the Whole had been held to consider the situation in Peru following the earthquake in that country, a question which the Council had already examined.

22. Instead of giving a detailed description of the Commission's activities, which were set out in its annual report (E/4806 and E/4806/Summary), he would confine himself to outlining the main ideas which the ECLA secretariat was seeking to follow in order to ensure that its work was oriented and its activities organized in such a way that the tasks assigned to it under the Second Development Decade were efficiently discharged. The secretariat's work could be divided into three main categories: economic and social information; research on problems of economic and social

development with a view to the preparation of strategies and practical measures; and operational activities, including technical assistance to Governments and management training activities in collaboration with ILPES.

23. So far as research was concerned, the ECLA secretariat was primarily concerned with organizing its studies and analyses on a systematic basis and directing them mainly towards the diagnosis of the problems confronting the developing countries of Latin America. That diagnosis, as based on the economic and social studies carried out by ECLA, led to three main conclusions: the rate of economic growth was extremely irregular and precarious and there was no assurance that it could be maintained at the high level attained during the past two years; secondly, the forces which promoted growth had to be organized in an institutional framework providing for the mobilization of domestic resources and of national skills and energies so as to make progress less dependent on external factors; thirdly, economic growth had only a limited effect on social progress, as could be seen from the extent of the employment problem, the high concentration of income and the uneven development of regions within one and the same country. In addition to indicating the basic objectives of the strategy to be pursued, the diagnosis revealed the need for progress with studies of population and employment in relation to development, the introduction and diffusion of technological advances, the occupational and individual distribution of income, and regional development, as well as with sectoral studies relating, for instance, to agriculture, industry and transport.

24. Although the importance of the employment problem was fully recognized, very few technical studies had been made of its relationship to development. Such studies were, however, essential for the definition of an effective and practical policy for the utilization of capital and labour. Similarly, in the agrarian sector, it was essential to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of different types of mechanization, of the effects of land reform and different farming systems on the level of employment, and the advantages in terms of yield and employment of bringing new land into cultivation.

25. With regard to the distribution of income, ECLA had organized joint study groups, one of which had already made a study on Argentina, and was trying to compile and complement existing data with a view to preparing general studies on the level and characteristics of income distribution in many countries. It was proposing to pay particular attention to two problems which were closely related to the social objectives of the development strategy, namely, the definition of the factors responsible for the inequality of incomes in Latin America, and the examination of policies for the improvement of income distribution. The problem of regional development was linked with the high concentration of economic activity and income within a few large towns, and ECLA, which feared that economic growth might accentuate that concentration still further in future, considered it necessary to intensify regional planning studies.

26. With regard to sectoral studies, it was essential to make critical analyses of industrial policies, which would

assist in the formulation of more rational policies within the context of the development strategy, and to press forward with studies of institutional changes, particularly on land reform and its contribution to increased production, the introduction of technological advances, and employment. Mention should also be made of the analysis of the relationship between agricultural development and industrial progress, which was the subject of a resolution adopted by the Commission. Where transport, communications and natural resources were concerned, the ECLA programme was unfortunately limited by budgetary restrictions and by the difficulty of recruiting competent technical staff.

27. With regard to the vulnerability of Latin America's economic progress and its heavy dependence on foreign aid, the diagnosis of Latin American conditions pointed to three fields in which ECLA needed to intensify its activities: (1) the mobilization of internal resources, (2) the study of policies ensuring an effective use of development aid and the augmentation and diversification of exports, and (3) the policy of promoting intra-regional trade, in particular through the regional and subregional integration agreements now being negotiated.

28. In developing its work programme, ECLA believed that it needed a fuller picture of Latin American conditions in all their diversity. While assumptions concerning the region as a whole were, of course, very useful in preparing a general strategy, particularly with regard to external action, in order to make practical proposals account also had to be taken of the situation and structure of each country in the region, and that would require an expansion of the activities of the Office for the Caribbean, the Bogotá Office and the Mexico Office. The Commission, which was already furnishing advisory services to the less developed countries of the region, would also have to expand its research into the problems of those countries and their development policies.

29. The tasks to be undertaken by ECLA during the Second Development Decade fell into three main categories: information and research, the periodical review and evaluation of progress during the Decade, and direct technical assistance to Governments. The research programme he had mentioned was designed to provide Governments with technical and practical information that would assist them in defining their objectives and policies and enable the secretariat to carry out its task of evaluation and to provide the necessary technical assistance to Governments. The Commission's research work already constituted an evaluation of the development process and of the internal and external factors promoting or impeding that process in the countries of the region. If the scope of that work was broadened and it was directed more specifically towards periodic evaluation, it could contribute to the preparation of the global evaluations to be made by the Council. To that end, ECLA would have to strengthen its co-ordination with the international and regional organizations which were already making sectoral studies and periodic evaluations. At the technical level, it would be necessary to improve the quality of statistics and to define

quantitative and qualitative indices to serve as a gauge of economic and social progress; both national and international action to improve statistical services would therefore have to be taken in the region. Such tasks would be facilitated if the developing countries defined their objectives and policies without delay, and if the developed countries produced comprehensive statements of the decisions and measures they proposed to take in connexion with the international strategy and with the recommendations and commitments made in various bodies. It would also be desirable for the international and regional financial institutions to follow the example of IBRD and prepare action plans related to the Second Development Decade.

30. With regard to technical co-operation, ECLA would have to increase its aid to Governments in preparing their development plans, in improving or establishing their planning machinery, and in the technical training of their civil servants. The multinational, interdisciplinary teams which it had been decided to set up would be a useful instrument for the provision of such aid, particularly to the less developed countries. In Latin America, technical assistance in planning and in the training of civil servants was mainly provided by the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning. In addition to co-operating with that Institute, ECLA also had its own programmes, and half the secretariat's work was concerned with operational activities relating to the advisory services furnished to Governments. Between them, therefore, the two institutions had a fund of experience which, coupled with the work of the multinational teams and with the co-operation of other organizations, would make it possible to expand and systematize the technical assistance services requested by Governments. In that respect, the programme for the Second Development Decade offered an excellent opportunity for giving a new impetus to planning in the Latin American countries.

31. Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Africa), introducing the annual report of ECA (E/4824 and E/4824/Summary), said that, in agriculture, ECA's main objective was increased food production, and that under a joint programme with FAO it had undertaken a revision of agricultural studies in the four subregions to bring them into line with FAO's Indicative World Plan and to identify the factors responsible for failure to achieve plan targets. Some of those factors — the quality of manpower, the orientation of agricultural research and the availability of information to potential users — had been the subject of studies whose implications ECA was now evaluating. The achievement of targets also depended on other factors and ECA had accordingly carried out studies of the main features of the food trade and complementary studies of grain price stabilization, the fish trade and livestock improvement. The ECA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division was studying the most effective means and methods of implementing regional development and of transforming rural communities. It should also be noted that the theme of the Sixth FAO Regional Conference for Africa in 1970 was "Intra-regional co-operation and trade in the field of agriculture", that the joint efforts of FAO

and UNDP to establish a West African rice development association and research centre were meeting with success, and that similar measures to improve livestock were under consideration. Since the establishment, in 1968, of a United Nations Programme for Agricultural Development in Africa, the Commission's work as a whole had become more relevant to the needs of the region and improvements in food production and livestock in the 1970s would undoubtedly radically change the conditions of life in rural areas during the Second Development Decade.

32. In industry, ECA had selected several projects which could be financed by Governments or private investors, and the secretariat was assessing their commercial profitability and social benefits. If Governments and potential investors could be associated in projects which would receive assistance from the African Development and UNIDO, the procedure would be applied to many similar projects.

33. Those efforts were complemented by continuing studies of the factors which accounted for the high cost of industrial production and inhibited industrial growth. The Commission was collaborating with specialized institutes in the search for technology suited to small-scale industries, particularly in rural areas, and was giving special attention to management training, project evaluation and the promotion of industries through its Industry and Housing Division. The meeting between industrialists and financiers and the action taken by the African Development Bank had resulted in the establishment of an international finance corporation (SIFIDA) for operations in all African countries.

34. In housing, ECA was continuing its study of building costs and of credit and other financial resources for housing construction. In particular, it had organized training courses for indigenous contractors, had assisted a low-cost housing experiment in Tanzania and projects in Ghana and Kenya, and was sponsoring, jointly with the International Co-operative Housing Development Association, the mobilization of domestic and external finance.

35. The Human Resources Development Division was engaged in a wide variety of activities concerned with such fields as training and social affairs, where technical assistance and advisory services were so important that they absorbed a considerable proportion of the Division's limited resources.

36. In trade, fiscal and monetary affairs, ECA's activities had included the establishment of a regional trade promotion centre and the inauguration of the Association of African Central Banks. To gain insight into trade promotion and monetary affairs, the Commission's Trade, Fiscal and Monetary Affairs Division had undertaken a comparative study of central banks and similar institutions in Africa. In the same field, ECA was supporting negotiations on the general system of preferences and provided consultative services for African producers of specific primary export commodities.

37. In the financial field, ECA had undertaken studies of the effect of fiscal policy on development, the harmonization of budget and plan procedures and incentive legislation for promoting private investment, and also an

analysis of aid to Africa. Studies on the prospects of intra-subregional trade in Eastern and Central Africa had also been completed, and a study of the role of insurance companies in mobilizing domestic savings was in progress.

38. In statistics and planning, the improvement of the statistical services of member States had continued as a result of the efforts made in training and in research on the structure and behaviour of African economies, which was revealing features with an important bearing on national, multinational and regional development strategy. The Research and Statistics Division had thus devoted a considerable part of its effort to the formulation of a strategy for the Second Development Decade.

39. The Population Programme Centre, which was designed to promote an awareness among member States of the role of the population factor in economic development, had organized a Seminar on the Application of Demographic Data and Analysis to Development Planning, and was exploring the possibility of establishing demographic research and training centres in the region.

40. Similarly, the Centre for Economic Co-operation had carried out an inquiry in the West African subregion to determine the views of member States on the form and content of economic co-operation. It was conducting a similar inquiry in Central Africa. A synthesis of sectoral studies had been submitted to the Maghreb countries as a basis for co-operation in industrial development. Missions had also been sent to three countries with a view to preparing a programme for improving hydrometeorological data; a Working Group of Experts on Water Resources Planning had been formed, and a preparatory meeting had been held in connexion with the Conference on African Hydrology and Hydrometeorology to be organized in collaboration with WMO and other United Nations agencies. Research had also been done on the development of mineral resources in several subregions and the possibility of establishing a mineral ore processing institute was under consideration. The Commission had decided to support the application by Cameroon and Nigeria for assistance with the establishment of cartographic training centres providing operational training in modern aerial survey techniques. In the energy field, ECA had continued the identification of projects suitable for joint action within the framework of its collaboration with the African Development Bank, IBRD and UNDP.

41. In transport and communications, the first phase of the study of transport integration in the Maghreb had been completed. Following a review of various transport studies carried out by the African Development Bank in consultation with IBRD, UNDP and ECA, specific projects were being selected for further study and financing. Not much more could be done about links between African countries until Governments were in a position to take decisions on industrial and agricultural specialization and on the increase in trade flows implicit in those decisions. The first phase of the pan-African telecommunications study had been completed by ITU, and UNDP had agreed to sponsor the second phase; one of the principal barriers to co-operation and trade within the region would thus soon be removed.

42. In science and technology, the Commission had submitted its first suggestions on the World Plan of Action to the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development. Work on the establishment of a regional institute of fuel science and technology was in progress; follow-up action was being taken in connexion with the seminars on science and mass media held in 1968 and 1969, and plans were well advanced for a symposium on the application of science and technology to development in Africa, to be held jointly with UNESCO.

43. The Commission's activities as a whole were therefore of a truly interdisciplinary character, and in many fields ECA had established close working relations with specialized agencies, resulting in the emergence of United Nations programmes in such fields as agriculture, telecommunications, human resources development and manpower. The need for the systematic organization of relations between United Nations specialized agencies and regional organizations was therefore particularly urgent, if the interdisciplinary approach to development problems was to be successful.

44. Mr. MARTIN (Director, United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut) said that despite the continuing losses and hardships caused by the war in the Middle East, the developing countries in that region were intensifying their development efforts. In view of those circumstances and of the fact that the scheme for a United Nations regional economic commission for the Middle East had been in abeyance for almost a quarter of a century, the Beirut Office functioned essentially as an office for the preparation of development studies. During the previous year, it had felt the impact of an increased volume of work on which the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNCTAD and UNIDO were requesting the assistance of the regional secretariats, but it was the increase in the number and the variety of requests from Governments which it had found most encouraging.

45. The services the Office tried to provide to Governments supplemented or complemented those which each country received under UNDP country programmes. The Office's field missions were technical co-operation or evaluation missions, and the studies and reports prepared by the Office dealt with specific problems facing those responsible for development in a particular country and were designed to facilitate their task or that of the United Nations experts working beside them. The meetings were technical meetings which brought countries together and whose purpose was the transfer and adaptation of knowledge.

46. With regard to the provision of country advisory services, there were clear-cut differences between the work of UNDP and the contribution made by the Office. While UNDP's work was mainly based on the individual preferences of Governments, the primary concern of the Office was the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the policy-making bodies of the United Nations. The United Nations work programme in the economic and social field was, however, so vast and many-sided that it could not be

used, even in broad outline, as a guide in determining the utilization of posts or of the limited resources which could be made available to the Beirut Office. There was no question of the latter being a miniature version of the central secretariat. The Office's resources were so modest that it had to adopt a highly selective approach to all the requests it received, requests which were often fully justified. The selection was based on two considerations. First, at the theoretical level, one responsibility naturally had priority, namely, the responsibility devolving on all United Nations bodies to attempt to make the Second Development Decade a reality by implementing a genuine global strategy. Such a strategy could obviously only be charted in terms of plans or outlines prepared at the national level, particularly in the third world, which was to be the primary beneficiary of that major undertaking. The countries with which the Beirut Office was more particularly concerned were still unequipped or poorly equipped in that respect, even though the political will was not lacking.

47. Secondly, as far as means to be employed were concerned, it should be emphasized that as soon as it was no longer a matter of purely technical projects, but of programmes and policies involving several disciplines, competent people were extremely difficult to find. That weakness of international aid became quite obvious whenever it came to meeting what was now the fundamental need, namely, to help Governments assemble the necessary information for preparing basic schemes and organizing consistent and effective planning.

48. To judge by the type of requests reaching the Beirut Office, those factors were becoming more and more important. To an increasing extent, needs were being revealed which did not involve the competence of one ministry or service so much as the capacity of each to act in the light of what the others were doing or could do within a common framework. There was a clearer realization that development planning was not a branch or field of activity, and that effective planning could only be undertaken by dynamic planning sections in the ministries responsible for the different sectors. Such sections, however, often only existed on paper, and even the bodies responsible for the over-all planning could not, because of lack of skills, see beyond the implementation of their own budget for the current year.

49. For some two years, the Beirut Office had been attempting to give Governments systematic help in preparing for industrialization by seeking to visualize industrial development in a more general context, taking into account everything that affected the life of the individual and the community without reference to political considerations. The means available to it for that purpose were very modest and the task was a delicate one, but the Office was encouraged by the confidence displayed in it by Governments, by the fact that the various United Nations organs were experiencing the same difficulties and were seeking to extend their collaboration, and by the interest and goodwill shown by the CPC, which had made a detailed study of the Office's work programme early in 1970. The Beirut Office hoped to continue justifying the confidence and hopes

placed in it by continuing its efforts in close collaboration with the UNDP resident representative in each country.

50. The study and discussions of the capacity of the United Nations development system that year had yielded ideas which were excellent, but which also gave rise to some concern; in particular, it had not been sufficiently emphasized that good experts were very hard to find, so that it would be difficult to place a good programming team alongside each resident representative, nor that the traditional distinction between research and operational activities was now out of date and even dangerous. Still more disquieting perhaps was the fact that the concern to draw up country programmes might serve to obscure the practical and theoretical importance of a multinational approach. Despite those reservations, the Office nevertheless considered that the study and discussion of the capacity of the United Nations system were ultimately bound to have beneficial results, particularly on the cohesion of the system. The difference between UNDP and the Office was perhaps more apparent than real; they shared the same concern to place the human resources they could mobilize in the service of development with the maximum effectiveness, in accordance with Governments' needs and wishes.

51. With regard to the mobilization of public opinion, which, according to the Preparatory Committee, was a prerequisite for the success of the second Development Decade, in the absence of an information service the Beirut Office had so far taken no action in that direction, which was all the more regrettable in that there was no inter-governmental body or regional commission to highlight the work of the United Nations in the economic and social field. He hoped therefore that the Office could be provided with the means of remedying that deficiency in the fairly near future.

52. Mr. AHMED (Secretary of the Council), referring to draft resolution E/L.1336, said that the original language was not only Russian, but also English and French. He hoped that members of the Council would make the necessary correction themselves.

53. Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) said he had a particular interest in regional co-operation. In his view, such co-operation in Africa required, in the first place, a change in the traditional patterns of African trade, which was almost exclusively oriented towards the western European countries. That situation, which was tending to continue as a result of very understandable pressure from the aid-supplying States, was one of the most serious obstacles to the promotion of economic co-operation between African countries.

54. In the second place, African national and international institutions lacked the necessary capacity to give a real impetus to intra-African trade. The Africa Trade Centre established by ECA did not have sufficient resources for that task, and his delegation hoped that an effort would soon be made to help the African countries, particularly in respect of the new exports which would have to be developed for intra-African trade. Some international companies organized their activities in a manner consistent with national development plans, but the majority encouraged

competitive industrialization behind Customs walls, a process which experience had shown to be dangerous.

55. In the third place, he would like to stress the difficult situation in which the least developed countries might find themselves in systems of regional co-operation. The United Nations Secretariat was recommending that those countries should receive assistance with national planning, but it would be advisable to give increased support to those countries to avoid the risk that, particularly in Africa, they might hinder regional co-operation because of their continued backwardness.

56. With regard to financing, now that the first signs of a truly international monetary system were beginning to appear, it was essential, if the success of the Second Development Decade was to be assured, to find some means of enabling the regional development banks and IBRD to benefit from the advantages of that new system. Moreover, means must also be found, particularly in Africa, of modifying the system of monetary zones if trade between the countries of those different areas was to be fostered.

57. With regard to the role that the regional economic commissions could play in multinational planning, United Nations bodies such as the ECA Centre for Economic Co-operation should not only help to identify the possibilities for co-operation, but should also collaborate, at least in the initial stages, in setting up and administering multinational institutions. Moreover, ECA, which already acted as a channel for the application of bilateral aid to multilateral action, must continue its work in that field and convince leaders of countries of the advantages of multinational co-operation during the Second Development Decade.

58. With regard to draft resolution E/L.1335, the financial implications (E/L.1337) would have to be slightly revised as the number of members of the Committee in question was twelve, not eighteen. He hoped that the United Nations would be able to give that modest help to the members of the ECA Executive Committee, as the work of the Committee was essential to the planning necessary for effective multinational co-operation.

59. Mr. JHA (Chairman, Joint Inspection Unit) introduced the reports on ECA (E/4733 and Add.1) and ECAFE (E/4781 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1), each of which had been prepared by three inspectors. The purpose of those inspections had been to study the work of the two commissions and evaluate their present and future role in the field of regional co-operation and as organizations forming part of the increasingly vast range of United Nations activities. After making their enquiry, the inspectors had made recommendations with a view to strengthening the links of the regional economic commissions with Headquarters and with the specialized agencies, so as to ensure more effective collaboration between all those bodies in the common task of development. The reports also contained suggestions on the future role of the commissions concerned, suggestions which would call for an increase in their operational activities.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.