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Fifth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 20 March 1951, at 10 a.m.

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Chairman:

Mr. OYEVAAR

Netherlands

<u>Members:</u>	Mr. SHVETZOV	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
	Mr. PLAZA	Chile
	Mr. HSIAO	China
	Mr. FARID	Egypt
	Mr. GOURSAT	France
	Mr. SUKTHANKAR	India
	Mr. FOIEN	Norway
	Mr. KHALIL	Pakistan
	Mr. SZYMANOWSKI	Poland
	Mr. SUYAZOV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Sir Osborne MANCE	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. BAKER	United States of America
	Mr. REINA	Venezuela

Representative of specialized agencies:

Mr. DAWSON	International Labour Organization (ILO)
Mr. HILL	World Health Organization (WHO)
Mr. HUTCHISON	International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Mr. WUBNIG	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Mr. CARNES	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Representative of non-governmental organization:

Mr. GAVIGAN	World Touring and Automobile Organization (OTA)
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Secretariat:

Mr. LUKAC	Director of the Division of Transport and Communications
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<u>Also present:</u>	Mr. CHARGUERAUD-HARTMANN	Director of the Division of Transport of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
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/ESTABLISHMENT

## ESTABLISHMENT OF A SUB-COMMITTEE TO PREPARE A REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION

The CHAIRMAN recalled the suggestion of the United Kingdom representative that a sub-committee of four members might be set up to draft, with the Secretariat, a review of the Commission's work for consideration at a later stage. The Commission had decided at its preceding meeting that such a report should be prepared, and the customary and expeditious practice was to assign that task to a drafting committee. The Vice-Chairman of the Commission (the representative of India) and the representatives of France, Poland and the United States might constitute that drafting body.

Mr. SUYAZOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. SEVETZOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) saw no need for the establishment of a drafting committee. The USSR representative thought that the Secretariat of the Transport and Communications Division could prepare a satisfactory report and that, in the meantime, the members of the Commission were free to consult the documentary material available. The Byelorussian representative did not think that a report or a general survey was necessary. Moreover, he understood that the question was to be discussed under item 12 of the agenda.

In reply to an inquiry by the CHAIRMAN, Mr. SZYMANOWSKI (Poland) declined to serve on a drafting committee, first because he objected to the constitution of such a body and saw no need for a special report, and secondly because he did not consider himself qualified to evaluate the Commission's work, as he was taking part in it for the first time.

Sir Osborne MANCE (United Kingdom) suggested the representative of Chile as the fourth member of the drafting committee. The representative of Chile expresses his willingness to serve.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the committee would be composed of the representatives of India, Chile, France and the United States. In consultation with the Secretariat, it would prepare a draft report on the work of the Commission and the subject of that report would ultimately be considered under item 12 of the agenda.

It was so decided.

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE SECRETARIAT: ITEM 10 OF THE AGENDA (E/CN.2/93/Rev.2)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) explained that the documentation under item 10 was intended to inform the Commission of developments which had taken place since the last session in respect of matters on which no further action was required. The addenda set forth the most recent developments.

(a) Regional developments in the field of inland transport (E/CN.2/102, E/CN.2/102/Corr.1 and E/CN.2/102/Add.1)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat), noting that questions of inland transport were primarily regional, reviewed the contents of document E/CN.2/102, which summarized the work done in the various regions both where United Nations regional commissions operated and where they did not. The Commission should be especially gratified by the establishment of an inland transport committee within the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) and by the compilation of a programme of priorities for dealing with rail, road, and inland waterway transport.

The Economic and Social Council had taken note of the resolution on inland transport adopted by the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), reported on page 10 of document E/CN.2/102, and no additional machinery had been created. Problems of inland transport were to be dealt with through combined technical and economic surveys made under the Technical Assistance Programme.

Since the Council had postponed the establishment of an Economic Commission for the Middle East, the recommendation for a meeting of experts on the inland transport of that area could not be carried out.

Mr. Lukac left to Mr. Chargueraud-Hartmann, Director of the Transport Division of the ECE, the task of informing the Commission of recent transport developments in Europe.

Mr. CHARGUERAUD-HARTMANN (Director of the Transport Division of ECE) said that there was but little to add to the information already in the documents before the Commission. At a meeting of the Working Party on Co-ordination of Transport of the ITC of ECE held in Geneva in February, consideration had been given to the factors affecting the comparability of various proposed studies on the international level. Studies were to be made of the true cost of transport, tariff structure, transport potential, needs of users and quality of service,

organization of the transport industry and conditions of employment. The Working Party had asked governments to submit information on all those topics, particularly on road and inland waterway transport rates, by June 1951. In studying needs of transport users and quality of service, the Working Party had taken into account studies made by the International Chamber of Commerce and had recommended that national studies should be guided by the need to determine the importance of two essential factors in the co-ordination of transport: freedom of choice of the means of transport by users; and freedom to operate transport "on own account". The ILO had undertaken a comparative study on conditions of employment in the various branches of the transport industry which would be completed as soon as replies had been received from all governments.

A meeting of statistical experts had been held in Geneva in the first week of March to consider problems of road statistics. The lack of data on that subject was hampering the co-ordination of transport. The Working Party had been greatly assisted by two statistical experts, one from the United Kingdom appointed by the Secretary-General and the other a Member of the United States delegation. Preliminary trials were to be made in European countries by statistical sampling methods. Within a year certain accurate comparative statistics on road transport should be available.

In connexion with transport of perishables, detailed studies had been made on packing and refrigeration and were to be co-ordinated by the Working Party.

Developments concerning rail transport had been adequately summarized on page 7 of document E/CN.2/102. A Working Party was aiming at a uniform plan to obtain comparable data on costs of <sup>transport</sup> by the various European railroad networks.

With regard to road transport, regional agreements had been concluded on weight and dimensions of vehicles and a more detailed rule of the road in conformity with the international convention on that subject. A Working Party was striving to organize road transport on an international level without incurring ruinous competition with railways. A conference had been held in Berne on the autocar services.

Working Parties were also studying the transport of dangerous goods by road and inland water, and the handling of such goods at ports. The nomenclature of dangerous goods for railway transport had been criticized by certain European countries and the Berne Office was reviewing the categories and studying new classifications.

The Inland Transport Committee attached great importance to road safety in view of the high human and material losses due to road accidents. To reduce those losses there was a need not only for the unification of road signals and other regulations, but also for a campaign of education to be undertaken by tourist and automobile associations. Much work was being done also through the Red Cross Organization. Finally, a working party had been dealing with the network of main international traffic arteries, a question of interest even to some countries of the Near East.

The CHAIRMAN noted that many of the factors discussed by the Director of the Transport Division of ECE would be considered by the Commission under various items of the agenda.

It was gratifying to note that ECAFE had decided to set up an inland transport committee which, while it would not slavishly follow the example of ECE -- for the problems in the two regions were different -- would be guided by the experience of the European group.

Mr. SUKTHANKAR (India) recalled that the Indian delegation to ECAFE had been first to propose the establishment of such a committee; it was particularly satisfied with its terms of reference. As the problems of the Far East and Asian area were different from those of Europe, the Committee would do well merely to examine without being wholly guided by the ECE experience.

The representative of India did not appreciate the value of establishing an Asian and Far Eastern Railway Association, in view of the small volume of international traffic in the area and wide differences in railway gauges. On the other hand, an inquiry into railway signalling would be useful and India would be prepared to consider how far it could co-operate in one. The proposed pilot project under the United Nations expanded technical assistance programme on inland and water transport in the area promised to be useful to India. In the past India had studied the irrigation aspects of inland waterways but had not contemplated their use as channels of communication. Any possible strain on railroads in the area might well be relieved by the development of inland waterway transport.

Mr. KHALIL (Pakistan) also welcomed the creation of an inland transport committee within ECAFE. He saw no need for an Asian and Far Eastern Railway Association and would prefer that matters of rail transport should be dealt with by sub-committees of the new committee.

/Mr. LUKAC

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) noted that the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts which had proposed the creation of the inland transport committee of ECAFE had also recommended that it should set up sub-committees to deal with road, railway and inland waterway transport.

In connexion with the inland waterways pilot project under the technical assistance programme it was significant that, on the day after the close of ECAFE's session, the Director of the Technical Assistance Administration had informed the regional commission of acceptance of the plan. The ECAFE Secretariat had appointed experts to study the subject accordingly.

(b) Travel questions: developments in 1950 (E/CN.2/103)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) reviewed the contents of document E/CN.2/103 and drew attention to the subjects dealt with in its annex III and summarized on page 14. Those two questions would be considered under two other items of the agenda.

In addition to the material on travel, two recent important developments should be noted. The Executive Board of UNESCO had approved the submission to the next General Conference of UNESCO of a preliminary study of the possibility of concluding an international convention reducing obstacles to the free movement of groups of persons engaged in educational, scientific and cultural activities. As the problem involved passport and visa regulations, it would be dealt with under item 7 of the agenda and a summary of the preliminary study would be circulated as a document.

As reported in Annex II of document E/CN.2/103, the Executive Secretary of ECAFE had submitted to the Committee on Industry and Trade at Lahore nine recommendations regarding future action for promoting international travel. The first eight recommendations had now been adopted by that Committee and subsequently approved by ECAFE at its seventh session.

(c) Barriers to the international transport of goods (E/CN.2/104, E/CN.2/104/Add.1)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) recalled that the Transport and Communications Commission had examined the problem at its third and fourth sessions after the item had been placed on its agenda at the request of the International Chamber of Commerce. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution of 12 July 1950,

/had requested

had requested the Secretary-General to bring that resolution to the notice of the Interim Commission of the International Trade Organization. The Secretary-General had acted accordingly and had received a reply from the Executive Secretary of the Interim Commission of the ITO, which was quoted in document E/CN.2/104/Add.1. In those circumstances no further action by the Commission was needed.

It was so agreed.

(d) Unification of maritime tonnage measurement (E/CN.2/105)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) said that at its fourth session the Commission had resolved that it would be appropriate to leave the question of intergovernmental action on unification of maritime tonnage measurement to the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) when it started work, and had urged governments to continue to study the problem. The Secretary-General had communicated to governments the resolution of the Commission, with special reference to the paragraph in which governments were urged to continue their studies.

Only three countries -- Norway, Iceland and the Netherlands -- had thus far ratified the Oslo Convention for a uniform system of tonnage measurements of ships, signed in June 1947.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that since the conclusion of the Oslo Convention another meeting of tonnage experts had been held at Stockholm in June 1950 and yet another was scheduled to be held at the Hague in 1952. The parties to that Convention felt that they could not wait indefinitely for IMCO to come into being and that some progress should be made towards unification of tonnage measurement.

Mr. BAKER (United States of America) said that the United States had not yet established its position but that it would bring its views when determined before the proper forum, IMCO, if it had by then been established.

Mr. GOURSAT (France) emphasized the difficulties resulting from lack of unification. States parties to the Oslo Convention still had to obtain different tonnage certificates for the Suez and Panama Canals. He suggested that the  
/Commission should



Commission should adopt a resolution stating that unification of tonnage measurement should be one of the most urgent questions to be examined by IMCO as soon as it came into being. The Secretariat could be asked to prepare the text of such a resolution.

It was so decided.

(e) Problems of maritime shipping affecting Latin America (E/CN.2/106)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) said that the Commission had examined the problem at its third and fourth sessions. As Latin-American countries had failed to forward the necessary information, the Commission had recommended to the Economic and Social Council that the question should be withdrawn from its agenda and left to other competent bodies, such as the Economic Commission for Latin America. In the meantime ECLA had decided to consult the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council with a view to co-operating in the Council's studies on the subject. On 12 July 1950 the Economic and Social Council had adopted a resolution referring the question for examination to the Economic Commission for Latin America.

The question, therefore, was no longer on the Commission's agenda and document E/CN.2/106 had been circulated for information purposes only.

Mr. REYNA (Venezuela) said that at a meeting held last May in Caracas and attended in particular by two lines in which Venezuela was interested, the Gran Columbiana Line and the Venezuelan Line, a decision had been made to reduce freight rates. Although the decision improved the situation it did not completely dispose of the problem.

Mr. GOURSAT (France) asked whether it would not be appropriate for the Commission to express the wish that ECLA should deal with the subject as soon as possible. When Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) suggested that the Commission, which had refrained from studying the problem, might find difficulty in making such a recommendation, Mr. GOURSAT withdrew his suggestion.

/(f) Situation

(f) Situation in respect of ratification of the Convention on the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (E/CN.2/107 and E/CN.2/107/Add.1)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) recalled that at its third session the Commission had expressed concern that the Convention establishing IMCO had not yet come into force. When confronted with the same position at its fourth session, the Commission had recommended to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a resolution pointing out to Member Governments that an early establishment of IMCO was desirable. The Council had adopted that resolution unanimously at its eleventh session. Thus far the Convention had been ratified by six countries: Canada, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. The failure to establish IMCO was hindering the work of some of the <sup>specialized</sup> agencies, in particular the International Telecommunication Union, the World Health Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Mr. GOURSAT (France) stated that in his country the ratification procedure was well advanced, so that the result would soon be forthcoming.

Mr. FOIEN (Norway) said that his country was now prepared to ratify the Convention and would be initiating the necessary parliamentary procedure during the current year.

Mr. PLAZA (Chile) said that he was awaiting information from his Government on that subject and would inform the Commission later of his country's attitude.

The CHAIRMAN said that the ratification of the Convention by France and Norway would bring the total number of ratifications up to eight. The merchant shipping of six of those countries was over one million tons and that of the other two was under one million tons. According to the Convention IMCO could not come into being until the Convention had been ratified by 21 countries, seven of which had to possess a merchant shipping tonnage of at least one million tons. All were agreed that it was essential for IMCO to be established as soon

/as possible,

as possible, and the members of the Commission should impress this necessity on their governments. In spite of such wide agreement, the question had now dragged on since 1948. Several specialized agencies were ~~hindered~~ **hampered in their work** and it would be futile for the Commission to go on urging the establishment of IMCO if its action were to have no concrete result. In those circumstances the only solution might be to convene another international conference to reduce the number of ratifications required for the establishment of IMCO. The Government of the Netherlands would be in favour of convening such a conference.

Mr. BAKER (United States of America) wondered what action the Commission could take to induce a larger number of countries to ratify the Convention. He wondered what was the reason for the small number of ratifications -- opposition or merely indifference?

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) thought that both reasons came into play and recalled that several countries had never felt very happy about certain provisions of the Convention. Some of them, however, had finally decided to overcome their objections, realizing that the Convention could serve a useful purpose even in its present form.

It had been decided that IMCO should come into being only when it had been assured solid support -- hence the provision that the Convention had to be ratified by twenty-one States. The number of ratifications usually required for a convention was much smaller. One of the unfortunate results of the large number required for IMCO was that no country felt any particular need to hasten its own ratification.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the discussion on that question should be postponed, and resumed when the Commission took up item 12 of its agenda.

(g) Situation in respect of ratification of the Convention on Road Traffic  
(E/CN.2/108)

Mr. LUKAC (Secretariat) said that five ratifications were required before the Convention on Road Traffic could come into force. Thus far it had been ratified by three countries: Czechoslovakia, France and the United States.

/Czechoslovakia had

Czechoslovakia had also ratified the Protocol on Road Signs and Signals, and the United States and France had ratified the Protocol concerning Countries or Territories at present Occupied.

The Economic and Social Council at its twelfth session had decided that West Germany and the Principality of Monaco were eligible to adhere to the Convention, so that they could now ratify it and thus increase the total number of ratifications to five.

He had been informed by the Norwegian permanent delegation to the United Nations that the Convention was now being translated into Norwegian and that Norway would examine what changes would have to be made in its own legislation before it could adhere to that Convention. Norway also felt that the Protocol on Road Signs and Signals should not come into force until the Committee of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to study that problem had completed its work. He recalled that European countries had been most anxious to conclude that Convention and hoped that they would prove their earlier interest by ratifying it as soon as possible.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of the Netherlands, said that his country was taking steps to ratify the Convention during the current year.

Sir Osborne MANCE (United Kingdom) said that his country also was taking steps to have the Convention ratified as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.