

**ECONOMIC
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SOCIAL COUNCIL****CONSEIL
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28 June 1946
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

SUMMARY RECORD OF PLENARY SESSION, COMMITTEE V (REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS)

Held at Hunter College, 27 June 1946 at 10:30 a.m.

FIRST MEETING

Chairman: Dr. TIMMERMAN (Netherlands)

1. Election of Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur

The meeting opened with the election of a Vice-Chairman for the Committee, Dr. STAMPAR (Yugoslavia) nominated Dr. THOMEN (Dominican Republic), who was unanimously elected. The Chairman suggested that the election of the Drafting Committee should be postponed until after the general discussion, and Dr. SZE (China) called attention to the decision of the General Committee (E/H/8,II,I) that each working committee should elect a chairman, vice-chairman, and rapporteur, who would act as a nominating committee for drafting and other sub-committees. Dr. STAMPAR (Yugoslavia) thereupon nominated for rapporteur Major C. MANI (India), who was likewise elected unanimously.

2. General Discussion

Surgeon-General Thomas PARRAN (United States) pointed out that the Charter of the United Nations, in Chapter VIII and Articles 57 and 63, had authorized the existence of regional arrangements or agencies dealing with matters appropriate for regional action and consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Although the United States Delegation strongly supported the establishment of a single world-wide health organization, it also felt that certain international health activities could be carried out most effectively on a regional basis. This idea has been approved by the Preparatory Commission, which, in both alternatives A and B, Section XII, of its Report, had provided for

regional committees and offices. The problem was therefore how best to utilize existing regional health organizations, in particular the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, which had operated over a period of years.

Dr. PARRAN believed that the conference "should establish the basic principles that health problems of the world are global in nature; that in dealing with them on an international scale the World Health Organization should have paramount authority; that the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau should be tied closely with the World Health Organization by appropriate agreements sufficiently flexible to meet any contingency".

He, therefore, proposed a rewording of Section XII, Paragraph 3, to provide for the integration of regional inter-governmental health agencies with the World Health Organization by means of special agreements. He also placed before the Committee the resolution drafted by the United States Delegation on the establishment of relationships between the World Health Organization and the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau.

The Hon. Brooke CLAXTON (Canada), paying tribute to the achievements of the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, emphasized the importance of this unique opportunity of establishing a strong world organization which would be of service to millions of people throughout the world. He discussed the relationship of regional organizations to the World Health Organization without special reference to any particular organization, pointing out that any regional office should be an integral part of the Organization, in addition to fulfilling its regional duties. It would have two functions, through its policy-making body and secretariat. Its regional functions could include the promotion of inter-governmental legislation on problems of health, research in problems peculiar to the region, diffusion of information relating to epidemics, provision of such administration and assistance as the adhering governments would require, and the promotion of educational campaigns. It would have, on the other hand, the important function of carrying out within the region the policies of the World Health Organization and of communicating to the

Assembly and Secretariat of the Organization pertinent information regarding regional health problems.

Mr. CLAXTON suggested that four documents should be drawn up; the first, a section in the convention to establish the general and continuing principles of all regional organizations; second, a protocol to establish by means of an Interim Commission the machinery to work out details of administration of regional bureaux and prepare drafts of special agreements; third, a resolution by the Conference describing proposed arrangements; and fourth, an agreement between the World Health Organization and existing regional organizations.

He concluded by again emphasizing the importance of the dual functions of any regional office, and suggested that after the Committee had reached agreement as to the main principles of procedure, a sub-committee should be appointed to draft detailed agreements.

Dr. Angel R. CINES (Paraguay) hoped that the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau would not only continue its present tasks, but assume the duties of being a regional office of the Organization, for the Americas. He recalled the resolution of the Fifth Pan-American Sanitary Conference, and Resolution XIV of the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace (1945), providing that "the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau should continue to act as the general co-ordinating sanitary agency of the American Republics..." and that "any world-wide public health organization should duly recognize the continental character of the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, and that this Bureau be given complete support in all its functions, in accordance with the provisions of the Pan-American Sanitary Code." He called attention to the fact that the peoples of America needed the help given to them by the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, and fully supported the draft resolution submitted by the U. S. Delegation.

Dr. Karl EVANG (Norway) stated that in his opinion the primary issue before the Committee was whether there should be one world health organization or a federation of several autonomous bodies. To the

Alternatives A and B suggested by the Preparatory Commission, the United States had now added a third, which in his opinion was not a compromise. It not only rejected Alternative A but also exceeded Alternative B, and tended not toward greater unity but toward further decentralization. As an integral part of the World Health Organization the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau would not only continue its present work, but also act as a regional office of the Organization, and would thus satisfy the desires of the Delegate for Paraguay.

Dr. EVANG stated that it was not feasible to centralize all functions in one organization, that regional offices and committees would be necessary, for example, in the Americas, the Far East, Europe and possibly the Middle East and South Pacific, and that this would imply a certain decentralization of authority, even though the offices were staffed and financed by the World Health Organization. It would be possible for governments to entrust regional offices with additional functions, and to support these functions financially, with the approval of the World Health Organization.

He strongly emphasized, however, the necessity of creating a single unified organization which would not only promote international unity in the field of health but would be a beneficial example in other fields of international co-operation. In his opinion the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, far from losing prestige by becoming a part of the World Health Organization, could only benefit from such a union, and become increasingly important. Finally, he emphasized the danger of continuing division and the creation of two types of members, one directly associated with the Organization, and the other rather loosely affiliated with it.

Dr. PAULA SOUZA (Brazil) stated that in his opinion the co-existence of the World Health Organization and the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau was not only possible but highly desirable. The Brazilian Delegation would fully support the Chapultepec resolution and hoped that the functions of the two organizations could be harmonized, either through the delegation

of certain powers to the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, or through its transformation into a regional office of the World Health Organization. He placed before the Committee the proposal of the Brazilian Delegation (E/H/REL/W.2/Rev.1) for the establishment of regional agreements.

The meeting rose at 12:35 p.m.
