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Chairman: Mr. Marcial TAMAYO (Bolivia).

AGENDA ITEM 31

Programmes of technical assistance (continued):

- (a) Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/4143, chap. III, sect. X- XII);
- (b) United Nations assistance in public administration: report of the Secretary-General (A/4212 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

GENERAL DISCUSSION (continued)

1. Mr. BURGER (Union of South Africa) wished to pay tribute to the Expanded Programme's record of solid achievement in the first ten years of its operations, and to re-affirm his country's faith in the values and virtues of technical co-operation.
2. His Government was to make its first contribution to the Expanded Programme in 1960. The fact that it had not contributed before should not be regarded as a sign of indifference or lack of sympathy. His country had itself developed from poverty and economic backwardness to relative prosperity, and fully understood the aspirations of under-developed States. In the early stages of its own development, South Africa had sent promising young men abroad for technical training and had imported technical skills, which it was still doing at the present time. As soon as it had been able to provide technical assistance itself, it had not been slow in doing so. So far his Government had confined its activities in the field of technical assistance to Africa South of the Sahara, principally because his people had learnt how to deal with the problems particular to that part of the African continent, and because the technical and scientific knowledge it had gained could be shared to the greatest advantage with its neighbours in Africa who were confronted by the same problems.
3. It was true that his country had been generously endowed by nature with mineral resources, but the people of South Africa had soon discovered that it was

impossible to live on gold and diamonds and extensive agriculture alone. Since 1925 his Government had therefore tried to diversify the national economy by introducing a customs tariff designed to afford minimum protection to deserving local industries, and by creating the climate necessary to attract foreign investment capital. He was glad to say that that policy had been successful, but the process of development in South Africa was still continuing. His country was still a net importer of capital. Between 1951 and 1958 his Government had borrowed \$185 million from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, of which \$61 million had already been repaid, and had floated public loans for appreciable amounts in the United States of America, Switzerland and the Netherlands for development purposes.

4. There was no end to the demands made on his country's resources, both human and financial. The population of South Africa included some eleven million Bantu and Coloured people, and the combined target figure set for the Expanded Programme and the Special Fund was dwarfed by the amounts which his Government spent every year on Bantu development and welfare—on Bantu welfare services alone, it was calculated \$112 million was expended yearly in South Africa. His country's short history was one of continuous struggle for advancement without the help of any bilateral or multinational financial aid programmes; and he felt sure that he had adequately explained why his Government had not felt able to contribute to the Expanded Programme in the past, why its contribution for 1960 was not larger, and why it still felt unable to contribute to the Special Fund.

5. At the General Assembly's thirteenth session, his delegation had expressed some misgivings about the programme for the provision of operational, executive and administrative personnel (OPEX) but, now that the Programme had been launched on an experimental basis, it would seem that it should in fairness be given a reasonable trial. His delegation reserved the right, however, to discuss the matter again at an appropriate time.

6. Mr. DE GUZMAN (Colombia) thought that technical assistance was not only one of the most important aspects of international co-operation but also a highly effective method of promoting mutual understanding between peoples and the maintenance of peace. His country had welcomed the establishment of the Expanded Programme and had contributed to the Programme over the past ten years within the limits of its resources, in the hope that technical assistance might be provided to as many countries and territories as possible. It was therefore a matter for satisfaction that assistance to the value of \$250 million had been provided to 140 countries and territories in the first ten years of the Programme's operations.

7. Colombia had made a careful study of its needs to ensure that the maximum benefit was derived from

the facilities offered by the United Nations, and the assistance provided had made a considerable contribution to the development of industry, agriculture, housing, education, public health and administration. In that connexion, he noted that he had recently had the pleasure of showing the Executive Chairman of TAB in person what Colombia was doing to keep its people abreast of modern technical developments. He would mention in particular the semi-official National Apprenticeship Service for training skilled workers, and the Colombian Institute for Technical Specialization Abroad, both of which might serve as models for similar organizations in other parts of Latin America.

8. Great as the achievements of the programmes of technical assistance had been, their effectiveness was limited by a number of disquieting weaknesses. Good will and the desire to promote the exchange of technical experience were valueless in themselves, unless agreement could be reached on a system of financing which would make it possible for the technical assistance planning authorities to translate their dreams into reality.

9. Some consideration, too, should be given to the conflict between the interests of requesting countries and the wider preoccupations of international organizations in determining the priority of requests for assistance. Requesting Governments were particularly sensitive to any outside evaluation of their needs, while international organizations often tried to apply impersonal and empirical criteria, which ran counter to national traditions and sentiments. It was essential to find some way of establishing a balance between the needs of individual countries and the facilities which could be provided by the organizations to which they belonged.

10. Mr. NATADININGRAT (Indonesia) thought that, in terms of human progress, technical assistance was the most important of all the United Nations activities.

11. He was glad to see that continued efforts were being made to improve the procedures of the Expanded Programme. He particularly welcomed the Economic and Social Council's decision to introduce two-year programming on an experimental basis for the period 1961-1962, and had no doubt that the new planning procedure would be a great improvement over the old.

12. His delegation had noted with great satisfaction the increase in contributions pledged at the recent Plodging Conference, but deeply regretted that, in spite of that increase, it might be necessary to reduce the programme for 1960. He hoped that in future years contributions would be sufficient to permit a considerable expansion of the Programme.

13. It was clearly too early to make a definite appraisal of the OPEX programme, and he would support the Secretary-General's request that the experiment be continued for another year. The number of requests made for assistance under the programme suggested that many countries already regarded it as a valuable experiment.

14. With reference to the Executive Chairman's statement that what had begun as technical assistance had proved to be technical co-operation on a world-wide scale, it was, he thought, true to say that the United Nations had not yet reached the goal of universal technical co-operation. When needs were urgent,

under-developed countries were prepared to accept any experts or equipment they could obtain, regardless of source. No available assistance should be denied to them. However, whatever the Expanded Programme might lack in financial resources, it made up for in the quality of the assistance furnished.

15. Mr. TREJOS (Costa Rica) thought that the Committee could be satisfied with the first ten years of the Expanded Programme, but that it should not be blind to the problems remaining to be solved if the Programme were to be entirely successful in fulfilling its objectives under the United Nations Charter. Since 1949 the Programme had undergone a slow but constant growth. It was disquieting, however, that resources had not mounted at the same rate as requests for assistance. Although the contributions of some States had increased, that increase had been offset by the decline in the percentage contribution of the major contributor. It was unfortunate that the financial stringency was greatest just when requests for international assistance were increasing, in particular from the newly independent African countries.

16. There were, of course, other difficulties, for example, in regard to the recruitment of qualified experts, but there was no doubt that the financial problem was the greatest threat to the future of the Programme. The responsibility was general but the solution lay in the hands of the economically powerful countries since they alone had the means to meet the growing demand for technical assistance. To insist on a reduction of administrative expenditures was not enough; in any case it implied an unwarranted criticism of the devoted servants of the Programme. Moreover, a saving of 1 or 2 per cent on administrative costs would be no solution to the problem; a massive increase in funds alone would suffice.

17. It was for other reasons, therefore, that his delegation would support the Argentine representative's suggestion (595th meeting) regarding the co-ordination, and perhaps merger, of the resident representatives' offices with the regional offices of the specialized agencies and the United Nations public information centres. Such a merger might or might not lead to a decline in administrative costs, but it would certainly increase efficiency and reduce overlapping.

18. With regard to the OPEX scheme, Costa Rica was one of the countries which had supported General Assembly resolution 1256 (XIII) initiating the new service. It was too early yet to attempt an appraisal of the success of the scheme, and his delegation would therefore prefer to await the Secretary-General's final report before expressing its views. The decision with regard to the requested increase in funds would of course rest with the Fifth Committee.

19. His delegation welcomed the arrangement for the provision of technical assistance on a payment basis. The number of requests by Governments for assistance in that form was proof of their faith in the technical assistance services. The projects paid for by recipient countries clearly met their urgent need and satisfactorily supplemented those carried out under the ordinary programmes.

20. Costa Rica was grateful for all the help it had received from the technical assistance bodies and was determined to make whatever effort it could towards the success of the venture.

21. Mr. EREZ (Turkey) said that the technical assistance programmes had made a slow start but had grown steadily in volume and importance over the years. The stagnation of the Expanded Programme's resources was therefore a matter for great regret, particularly as the demands for assistance were bound to multiply as more countries emerged to independence. His delegation fully supported the idea of increasing the share of the African countries, but believed that that should not be done at the expense of the national programmes of other under-developed countries. What was needed was a larger programme able to satisfy all requirements.

22. His Government had always contributed to the Expanded Programme to the limit of its ability. He would note in passing that contrary to the information in annex I of the TAB report (E/3226) his country's final contribution in 1959 had been the equivalent of \$210,000, as in previous years. Although the same figure had been pledged for 1960, the Turkish Government hoped to be able to increase it to \$295,000 in the course of the year. Turkey had been happy also to contribute to what was now a form of world-wide co-operation by providing experts and by receiving fellowship-holders from other countries. It had also participated in a number of regional projects centred in Turkey such as the establishment of a Middle East Highway Training Centre, an Institute of Public Administration for Turkey and the Middle East, and a Middle East Technical University.

23. While recognizing the value of both the Expanded Programme and the regular programme, he felt that some improvements might be made. In the first place, national and regional programmes should be separated and the latter should not be implemented at the expense of the former. Secondly, steps should be taken to speed up the recruitment of experts; if, as often happened, it was not possible to recruit the experts required for a particular project until mid-year, funds were wasted and it was necessary to continue a project into the following year. It would be useful to compile a list of qualified international experts in the appropriate fields, who were familiar with and ready to take up work under the United Nations programmes. As regards fellowships he would suggest that the language requirement should not be applied too strictly since it might exclude persons well qualified in the subject of study. It was clear that a number of countries were receiving bilateral or multilateral assistance from outside the United Nations. For the best results all projects and programmes should be brought into harmony with each other; the recipient Governments were obviously in the best position to do that, but in planning its programme, the United Nations ought to bear in mind projects being undertaken from other sources.

24. His delegation supported the proposal for an experiment in two-year programming in 1961 and 1962. It welcomed the participation of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the Expanded Programme.

25. As to the OPEX scheme, his delegation felt that it was filling a gap in the technical assistance services and meeting a need of the under-developed countries. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, the new service could not yet be completely evaluated, but his delegation was prepared to support the suggestion that the experiment should be continued for a further year. With regard to the proposed increase in funds,

his delegation reserved its right to express its views on that matter in the Fifth Committee.

26. Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Soviet Union knew from its own experience that technical progress and the training of national technical personnel were important factors in the rapid and all-round development of a country's productive forces. International technical assistance was therefore a vital means of promoting the development of the national economies of the less developed countries. Such assistance ought, of course, as the founding resolutions clearly stated, to be free from all economic or political conditions and the types of service furnished should be determined by the recipient Governments.

27. It had been suggested in the Committee that the technical assistance programmes were programmes of technical co-operation on a world-wide scale. But his delegation felt that those remarks were not entirely justified. Many countries were still deliberately excluded from participation in technical assistance, as well as from participation in the Special Fund, to the detriment of the United Nations' prestige. The situation was entirely unwarranted. The Soviet Union's position of principle regarding the granting of technical assistance to the less developed countries had been made quite clear by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR in a statement on 12 July 1958 when he had spoken of the ever-increasing help that country was giving to less developed countries.

28. His delegation was not satisfied with the working of the United Nations technical assistance programmes. The Soviet Union, for instance, had frequently offered its experts and technical equipment for the benefit of the less developed countries, but its offers had consistently been rejected. It did not claim any particular rights in that respect, but it did not think that certain countries should have the monopoly in the provision of experts and equipment. In 1958, for example, 1066 of the 2,427 experts appointed had come from four Western countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands—and only forty from the Soviet Union. That was a violation of the geographical principle which should be applied in the selection of experts. The Commissioner for Technical Assistance would not have encountered such difficulties in recruiting qualified experts if he had sought them from all the participating countries. The Soviet Union Ministry of Foreign Affairs had done its best to assist the United Nations in its choice by sending the Secretary-General in March 1958 a list of sixty Soviet specialists who could be used as United Nations experts; only one person had been selected from that list. The position had been similar in the current year, and the same situation prevailed in connexion with the specialized agencies, especially the ILO.

29. On 24 June 1959 the Soviet delegation had again drawn attention to the fact that it was open to the Secretary-General to decide the question of sending Soviet experts, but no change in the situation had as yet taken place.

30. It had been said that it was difficult to make use of Soviet experts because few of them knew foreign languages. That argument was obviously untenable in view of his Government's stated willingness to send interpreters, at its own expense, to accompany Soviet

experts whenever necessary. Moreover, it was well known that the experts sent from other countries frequently did not know the language of the countries in which they worked. His delegation did not think that the representatives of under-developed countries in the Committee would regard lack of knowledge of the language of the country as a serious obstacle to the usefulness of Soviet experts, especially since the experts recommended for such work were among the most experienced and best qualified in his country. The Yugoslav representative had spoken of the quality of their work; mention might also be made of the high praise they had received from the Afghan authorities for the technical assistance they were rendering in that country. It should be pointed out in that connexion that the Soviet Union programme of bilateral assistance to numerous countries was proceeding successfully. At the beginning of 1959 his country had been providing technical assistance in the construction of about 100 industrial enterprises and 110 other projects. It was also providing technical assistance in carrying out hydraulic engineering projects, constructing hydroelectric stations and irrigation systems, and establishing geological and topographical research and national training centres. An important place was also given in its programme to the training of experts from the under-developed countries in the Soviet Union. During the 1955-1958 period, equipment supplied by the Soviet Union within the framework of United Nations technical assistance had been sent to twenty countries.

31. Soviet representatives had taken an active part in the work of United Nations organs concerned with economic development, and had put forward a number of practical proposals to increase the technical assistance being given to the under-developed countries. At the twenty-eighth session of the Economic and Social Council, for example, his delegation had proposed measures to promote the exchange of scientific knowledge which had later been embodied in Council resolution 727 A (XXVIII). At the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East it had put forward a number of suggestions intended to increase the provision of technical assistance to the countries of that region, including suggestions for the holding of industrial exhibitions and symposiums on industrial problems, and the establishment of regional centres for training specialists and regional geological research institutes. It had also offered to share its technical experience with those countries by sending experts to them and providing fellowships for their nationals in the Soviet Union and had offered technical assistance in the Lower Mekong river basin development project. His Government hoped that the proposals not yet acted upon would be taken up, and it would continue to make further suggestions for the strengthening of technical assistance to the under-developed countries.

32. His delegation considered that much could be done to increase the effectiveness of United Nations technical assistance by more rational use of available resources. In that connexion, it was regrettable, especially in view of the unanimous resolutions repeatedly adopted by the United Nations regarding the primary importance of industrialization for the development of the under-developed countries, that the percentage of technical assistance devoted to projects connected with industrialization had decreased from

10.5 per cent in 1956 to 7.9 per cent in 1958. It was also unfortunate that the number of fellowships granted under technical assistance was being decreased, and that European nationals continued to predominate among fellowship-holders, the proportion of fellowships granted to Europeans having actually increased between 1950 and 1958, in spite of the fact that Europe was the most highly developed of the continents. At its last session, the General Assembly had requested TAB to submit a report on technical training facilities (resolution 1255 C (XIII)); to the best of his knowledge, however, no such report had yet been made.

33. With regard to the OPEX programme, it was his delegation's view that, whatever the urgency of the need for trained administrators, it should be filled primarily by training nationals of the countries concerned. It would also point out that between 1955 and 1958 the Programme's average expenditure for experts had risen by 20 per cent, as compared with an increase in average expenditure on fellowships of only 9 per cent.

34. His delegation also considered that the task of evaluating the progress of the technical assistance programme, and the results it had achieved, as well as the quality of the experts employed, was very important and should be given all the attention it deserved. In that connexion he would point out that in the ten years of the Programme's existence more had been spent for administrative expenses than the entire resources available to it for one year.

35. His delegation also deplored the trend which now seemed to be developing towards the establishment of a new category of experts, who would advise Governments on the selection of technical assistance projects. It doubted the need for such advisers and felt that the function of the United Nations should be confined to studying the requests made by Governments and seeking means to satisfy them.

36. In spite of those short-comings, and others such as the failure to utilize all contributions fully, his delegation considered that there were good prospects for the extension of United Nations technical assistance, provided that a constant effort was made to improve the programmes. The need of the newly independent countries for such assistance was particularly great and must be given special consideration. His Government hoped that the discussion at the present session would lead to elimination of the Programme's short-comings and stood ready to make every effort to ensure the success of the United Nations endeavours.

37. Mr. EASTMAN (Liberia), exercising his right of reply, said he had understood the Turkish representative to say that his Government hoped the technical assistance given to the African countries would not be at the expense of the other under-developed countries. The African countries wanted only their proportionate share of technical assistance—a share they had not been receiving, as reference to the figures in paragraph 8 of the TAB report (E/3226) would make clear.

38. Mr. EREZ (Turkey) said he had intended merely to point out his Government's awareness of the growing need of the African countries for technical assistance. While it considered that the needs of the other under-developed countries must also be borne

in mind, his delegation had in fact gone on to state its conviction that the technical assistance programme must be enlarged in order to satisfy the justified needs of all countries.

AGENDA ITEM 29

Progress and operations of the Special Fund (A/4217^{1/} and Add.1, A/4143, chap. III, sect. XIII, A/C.2/L.412) (concluded)

DRAFT REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE (A/C.2/L.412)

39. Mrs. WRIGHT (Denmark), Rapporteur, in introducing the draft report of the Second Committee

^{1/} Note by the Secretary-General transmitting to the General Assembly the report of the Governing Council of the Special Fund to the Economic and Social Council (E/3270).

(A/C.2/L.412), suggested that the following minor changes should be made: firstly, in paragraph 13, the first clause of the second sentence reading "The sponsors of the draft resolution having accepted this proposal (which was also acceptable to the sponsors of the amendment)," should be amended to read: "Since the sponsors of the amendment as well as the sponsors of the draft resolution accepted this proposal,"; secondly, the draft resolution at the end of the report should be entitled "Progress and operations of the Special Fund"; and thirdly, in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, the words "or members" should be inserted after "United Nations", and the word "its" in the last phrase should be replaced by "the".

It was so decided.

The draft report, as amended, was approved.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.