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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, sec. X - XII)
- (b) United Nations assistance in public administration: Report of the Secretary-General (A/4212 and Corr. 1)

**GENERAL DISCUSSION (continued)**

1. Mr. PSCOLKA (Czechoslovakia) said that the record of the technical assistance programmes over ten years was a good one. The objective of technical assistance—to level out economic differences between countries—was worthwhile, and it could best be achieved, in his delegation's view, by the rapid industrialization of the less developed countries. More could be done in that direction by sending industrial experts, training national technicians for industrial production, and so on. Universality was all-important in a co-operative international venture of that kind, and political motives should not be allowed to exclude any country from it. In actual fact, the number of contributing countries and the volume of contributions had steadily increased over the years, but even more noteworthy was the increasing participation of the less developed countries themselves. They were not only receiving assistance but rendering it also, and had contributed some hundreds of the thousands of experts sent to the less developed countries during the life of the programmes.

2. That did not mean, however, that there were not short-comings in the method of operation of the programmes. Thus, for instance, it was contrary to the basic principle of technical assistance and to the spirit of the United Nations Charter to continue to refuse the contributions and technical co-operation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Germany. Similarly, there was the question of the non-utilization of the contributions of certain States, including Hungary and his own country. Czechoslovakia was industrially very advanced, and many of the less developed countries could bear witness to the benefit they had derived from the experts and the technical and industrial equipment received from Czechoslovakia through bilateral agreements. Yet

Czechoslovakia's contribution had never been properly used, and the oddest reasons were given for refusing to employ its experts. Again, as to the actual content of the programmes, although his delegation did not underestimate the importance of the training of administrative workers, nevertheless it believed that assistance should be directed primarily to the development of natural resources and the growth of production. It was clear from recent discussions in connexion with the Special Fund that that view was shared by the less developed countries themselves.

3. The country programming method had proved to be sound, for individual countries clearly knew best what were their most pressing needs and could be relied upon to dovetail the help they received from the United Nations into their national programmes. The method should in fact be carried further, so that the wishes of the less developed countries were more nearly met. It would be useful in some projects to make plans covering two or even more years, as had been suggested.

4. His delegation believed that the regional economic commissions should be encouraged to play a larger part in the Expanded Programme; they were well informed about economic development needs of their regions and knew what were the most appropriate forms of assistance to offer. They could be most useful in co-ordinating joint projects for a number of countries in a given region, thereby facilitating a more effective use of the financial and material resources available. They could also assume responsibility for the award of scholarships and the practical training of specialists from the less developed countries. Incidentally the sharp fall in the number of scholarships was regrettable, particularly in view of General Assembly resolution 1255 E (XIII).

5. Czechoslovakia fully believed in the accelerated economic development of the less developed countries. It had itself received invaluable assistance from the other socialist countries, and had passed on a good deal of its knowledge and experience to other countries both through bilateral arrangements and through the ideal channel of the United Nations. Czechoslovakia, in providing technical assistance to a number of countries on an ever-increasing scale—mostly on a bilateral basis—regarded technical assistance also as a significant contribution to the peaceful coexistence of countries with different economic and social systems.

6. Mr. PENTEADO (Brazil) said that for the first time the report of the Executive Chairman of TAB (592nd meeting) had filled him with misgiving rather than with optimism, for the Expanded Programme showed signs of shrinking. That would be not only disastrous for the less developed countries but a fatal blow to the prestige of the United Nations. It had been estimated at the time of launching of the Expanded Programme that sums in the neighbourhood of

\$10,000 million a year would be required for a number of years if the task was to be accomplished. The United States had been outstandingly generous and more could not be expected of it. Other countries too, such as the United Kingdom, deserved the gratitude of the international community. Even small countries like Ecuador were doing their best to assist the programme. Nevertheless the total amassed through voluntary contributions—about \$30 million a year—was but a fraction of the amount needed and ludicrously inadequate for carrying on the work. The least that could be done therefore was to see to it that that figure did not fall any further.

7. The nineteenth century dictum that society was based on the resignation of the poor no longer held good. The poor were no longer resigned. Education and mass communication media had brought about a revolutionary psychological change, and the world must heed it or be lost. In those circumstances the shortage of even the resources needed for programmes already approved struck his delegation with alarm. He fully supported the plea that more attention should be given to the newly independent African countries, but in the present situation he seriously doubted the justification for giving assistance to Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, since all of them were under the administration of Powers which were bound by the Charter to grant them economic and social assistance until such time as they became independent. The newly independent countries had no other source to look to than the United Nations, and it should not fail them.

8. Mr. SILVA SUCRE (Venezuela) said that, in his country's view, the work done through the technical assistance programmes over the past ten years constituted one of the soundest achievements of the United Nations. Since 1954 Venezuela's participation in the programmes, both as contributor and as recipient, had increased steadily. In addition to the regular programme and the Expanded Programme Venezuela had in recent years also drawn upon a third source, that known as technical assistance on a payment basis.

9. His delegation had been particularly pleased to note that TAA's administrative and operational services costs had amounted to only 13.2 per cent of the total cost of operations in 1958, and that the regular programme had been so ably administered that it had been possible to devote \$140,000 originally allocated for such costs to field projects. His Government was giving careful consideration to the proposed new local costs arrangements and reserved the right to revert to the question later. It supported the new country programming procedures recommended in Council resolution 735 (XXVIII), which would allow greater flexibility in the choice of projects and give requesting Governments an opportunity to plan on a medium-term basis.

10. His delegation would suggest that consideration should be given to the possibility of establishing, under United Nations auspices, a system for the exchange of information concerning technical assistance programmes being carried out in countries belonging to the same regions. Such projects were often complementary, and an exchange of information on them would undoubtedly add to the value of the projects in each country. His delegation also supported the Secretary-General's suggestion (A/4212

and Corr.1) regarding the continuation of the programme of technical assistance in public administration; its usefulness had now been fully demonstrated by the number of requests received.

11. In conclusion, he expressed his Government's appreciation of the work of the Executive Chairman of TAB.

12. Mr. VIAUD (France) expressed his Government's appreciation of the work accomplished under the Expanded Programme during the past ten years. While France agreed that industrialization was necessary for the economic development of the underdeveloped countries, it attached great importance to what it preferred to call technical co-operation, and was devoting considerable effort to supplying it on a large scale bilaterally. United Nations technical assistance was often a valuable complement to such bilateral aid, although it tended to be rather unwieldy in its operating procedures. If United Nations technical assistance were regarded as a single entity, its total resources were considerable; during the current year they would amount to \$90 million, not counting the local currency contributions of recipient countries.

13. In his delegation's view the resources now available should be made more effective by simplifying, co-ordinating and rationalizing administrative procedures. The recent decisions taken by TAC regarding country programming and the allocation of administrative costs were a welcome step in that direction. In approving, for the time being at least, the system of a 12 per cent allocation, his delegation wished to make it clear that the participating organizations should consider that allocation as the maximum they were authorized to spend for administrative costs in connexion with the Expanded Programme; they should, indeed, endeavour to reduce their administrative costs below the 12 per cent limit; for that reason his delegation approved TAC's decision to allow them to use any savings made from their allocations for new projects and hoped it would encourage them to effect such savings. The most rational ultimate solution to the problem would be the absorption of administrative costs into the regular budgets of participating organizations, except of course for the operating costs of TAB.

14. The provisional simplification of local costs arrangements decided upon by TAC, though not entirely satisfactory, was also a step forward. His delegation trusted in the wisdom of the Executive Chairman of TAB to find, in consultation with the Governments most concerned, an equally practicable but more equitable final solution to the problem.

15. While those three decisions represented a considerable improvement in the programme procedures, they should not halt the search for further ways of simplifying procedures and decreasing general costs.

16. With regard to the regular programme, he noted that an increase of almost 20 per cent in allocations was being requested (A/C.5/777, paras. 35-38 and 42-44). His delegation did not feel that such an increase should take place without prior review by the competent technical assistance body, namely TAC. His delegation was glad to note from paragraph 234 of the Economic and Social Council's report (A/4143) that the Secretary-General was giving attention to the same problem, and it welcomed the announcement by

the Commissioner for Technical Assistance that the regular programme would be submitted to the next meeting of TAC. The submission of a detailed report on operations during the current year, which had also been announced by Mr. Heurtematte, would constitute a considerable further step forward.

17. His delegation considered that the Secretary-General's report on technical assistance in public administration might have reflected more faithfully the doubts expressed by many delegations regarding the usefulness of the experiment. His delegation agreed that the experiment should be continued for another year, but considered that, in order not to prejudice its results in either direction, it was essential not to change the conditions of the experiment in any way. For that reason, it could not agree with the Secretary-General's recommendation that the 1960 budgetary allocation for the programme should be increased.

18. Mr. KAKITSUBO (Japan) said that his delegation was impressed and encouraged by the figures quoted by the Executive Chairman of TAB (592nd meeting) illustrating the achievements of the Expanded Programme during its first ten years of operation. His country had joined the Expanded Programme in 1952, long before its admission to the United Nations, and would do all it could to ensure the Programme's success. In the spring of 1959, a United Nations Trade Promotion Centre, organized in Tokyo under the sponsorship of the United Nations Bureau of Technical Assistance operations and ECAFE had provided a two months' training programme. Twenty-one participants and observers from fourteen countries had attended the Centre, which had been welcomed as the first venture of its kind in the ECAFE region.

19. Three trends could be discerned in the programme's operations. First, there had been a remarkable increase in the number of countries, including under-developed countries, providing experts and fellowships. That trend had to a certain extent been foreseen when the programme was founded and a similar development could be observed in other technical assistance programmes, such as the Colombo Plan, in which his country participated.

20. Secondly, of the three media of assistance offered, there had been an increasing tendency to give experts higher priority than fellowships and equipment. The concern which some delegations had expressed at that trend was not altogether warranted since, under the current country programming procedures, requesting Governments could themselves decide the relative priorities to be assigned to each medium of assistance. It was possible that Governments had thought that the Expanded Programme was the best source from which to seek the experts required, since the United Nations and its specialized agencies were able to obtain experts with widely different abilities and experience from a wide range of countries. On the other hand, Governments certainly knew that they could obtain fellowships through other multilateral and bilateral programmes. In that connexion, it was worthy of note that the number of fellowships awarded in 1958 under the regular programme had increased by 16 per cent over the figure for 1957.

21. Thirdly, as many delegations had noted with concern, the rate of increase in contributions to the Pro-

gramme had recently been slowing down. One method of overcoming inadequacy of resources was to urge Member States to contribute more, and another was to make the best possible use of the limited resources available. To that end, it was essential to establish a clear-cut division of labour, and close co-ordination, between the Expanded Programme and the Special Fund at all levels. Relatively large projects, such as the establishment of regional training centres, might more appropriately be undertaken by the Special Fund.

22. His delegation whole-heartedly supported the country programming procedures which, since their introduction in 1954, seemed to have gained universal approval, as they enabled recipient countries to assign relative priorities to the three different media of assistance offered by the various participating organizations; and it also welcomed the proposal by TAC to introduce two-year programming instead of the present one-year cycle, since the former would give more time and flexibility for the planning and implementation of projects, and would lead to a more effective use of available resources. He shared the view that abolition of the sub-totals at present allocated to each of the participating organizations within the country targets established by TAB would give greater freedom of choice to recipient countries and would enable them to make more effective use of the assistance provided.

23. As to local cost arrangements, his delegation would support the recommendations contained in Council resolution 736 (XXVIII), which would tend to simplify the present method of assessing local cost obligations.

24. With regard to assistance in public administration, he said that the doubts which his delegation had originally entertained as to the availability of appropriate personnel and the wish of under-developed countries to employ them had been dispelled by the statements contained in paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Secretary-General's report (A/4212 and Corr.1) and by the most recent information which the Director of the Office for Public Administration had given the Committee at its 593rd meeting. He was therefore prepared to support the suggestions made by the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-eighth session, as contained in paragraph 20 of his report, but hoped that, when the Secretary-General presented his definitive report and recommendations to the Council at its thirtieth session, he would facilitate the Council's deliberations by including some comments from recipient Governments on their experience with the programme for the provision of operational, executive and administrative personnel (OPEX).

25. Mr. STANOVNIK (Yugoslavia) said that, while the statistics given by the Executive Chairman of TAB in his statement to the Committee were impressive, they still did not reflect the full scope and significance of the Expanded Programme's operations. It should be remembered too that, for each dollar received from abroad, recipient countries had themselves contributed three dollars from their own resources towards technical assistance projects; but even that additional consideration gave an incomplete picture of the tremendous catalysing force which the programme exercised.

26. With regard to the underlying policy of the Programme, he observed that the first ten years of operations had witnessed not only a growth of the programme itself, but a crystallization of the very principles of multilateralism by experience gained in practical operations. The essence of the Programme's multilateral character was that contributions were strictly voluntary and planning was based exclusively on requests submitted by recipient Governments, while the General Assembly had adopted certain basic principles and had elected an independent executive authority to administer the Programme in conformity with those principles. The Programme was not therefore a kind of clearing-house, where the international framework was merely a disguise for what were essentially bilateral operations. On the contrary, it was an essential feature of the programme that individual contributions were used to apply the collective principles of the United Nations, and that direct implementation of projects was carried out not by individual countries or by experts from individual countries, but first and foremost by the United Nations. Loyalty to the United Nations was, therefore, the axis around which the whole Programme revolved, and recipient countries should be grateful for the technical assistance received not to individual States, but exclusively to the United Nations as a whole.

27. In 1949 it might have seemed impossible to administer such a programme successfully, and at the same time efficiently in the economic sense. Although experience had shown that difficulties might arise, particularly when a large part of the contributions was paid in local currencies, the last decade had proved not only that the Programme could be realized, but also that it was highly efficient from the economic point of view. Complaints were often expressed in the Parliaments of various countries about the economic inefficiency of bilateral programmes, their bureaucratic defects and the obstacles encountered in their implementation; but requests for assistance from the United Nations Expanded Programme always exceeded available resources, which in itself was the best proof of the Programme's high standards.

28. As to the question raised by the Executive Chairman of TAB, whether the United Nations was now reaching the limits of what was needed by the less developed countries for the kind of service which the Expanded Programme was providing, the facts seemed to provide the best answer. When the Expanded Programme was launched, some had expressed the view that the capacity of under-developed countries to assimilate technical assistance was limited, and that view had been confirmed, seemingly, by the first year of operations, when only \$6 million out of an available total of \$20 million had been spent. In the following year, however, available resources had

been utilized to the full, and in subsequent years resources had always been inadequate to meet the pressure of new requests. It was clear that the limit was set exclusively by the extent of resources available. The Special Fund had been established, not because it was impossible usefully to invest \$100 million annually in the traditional field of technical assistance, but because all Member States had understood that the United Nations could not confine its activities to technical assistance only, but should also prepare the way for extending its activities to capital financing as well.

29. Experience had shown that there was no uniformity in the type of assistance needed. Most countries in the initial stage of economic development needed surveys of their economic resources or plans for economic development. Countries in the initial phase most frequently asked for assistance in training national personnel, while those which had already taken the first steps on the road to industrialization were mainly interested in obtaining expert assistance in solving complicated technical problems. His delegation did not wish to enter into dispute on the relative merits of fellowships and assistance by experts, or of assistance in industry and assistance in agriculture; but it did wish to stress that assistance should always be provided in the form in which it was requested by the Governments concerned.

30. He wished to express his concern at the statement by the Executive Chairman of TAB that a 3 per cent reduction would be necessary in the 1960 programme, which had already been planned at 5 per cent below the level of the approved programme for 1959. Such a decision was all the more regrettable in that prospective contributions had increased by \$3 million to a total of \$33 million.

31. His country regarded the Programme as a co-operative undertaking, producing dividends in the form of friendship among nations and consolidation of peace; and no reduction should be permitted at a time when new needs were arising, especially in countries which had recently gained their independence. He would ask the Executive Chairman of TAB to give a more detailed statement of his views on the Programme's financial situation. It seemed that the Working Capital and Reserve Fund had reached a fairly high level, and the firm support of the Programme expressed by delegations surely provided an adequate guarantee that it would continue in existence for a long time to come. The Committee should therefore examine to what extent the Programme's financial security might be reduced, so that its operational capacity could be increased or at least maintained at the 1959 level.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.