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TRAVEL QUESTIONS: DEVELOPMENTS IN 1951 AND 1952

Note by the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

In resolution 35 (IV) adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 28 March 1947, the Transport and Communications Commission is entrusted with the task of advising the Council on travel matters and requesting the Commission to follow international developments in the field of travel and to report to the Council from time to time as might be appropriate.

To assist the Commission in the implementation of this resolution, reports on travel questions have been prepared for all of its sessions of the Commission from the second onward (E/CN.2/37, E/CN.2/62, E/CN.2/70, E/CN.2/70/Add.1, E/CN.2/103 and E/CN.2/103/Add.1).

A summary of developments in this field since the fifth session is set out in the present document. Such developments relate to the activities of international inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies of a world-wide or regional character concerned with the facilitation of international travel.

II. ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL BODIES

A. World-wide activities

1. Inter-governmental organizations

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Following the entry into force of annex 9 of the International Civil Aviation Convention "Standards and Recommended Practices - Facilitation of International Air Transport" (E/CN.2/70, E/CN.2/71, E/CN.2/71/Add.1, E/CN.2/103 and E/CN.2/103/Add.1), ICAO continued its efforts to simplify and standardize the formalities for the international transport by air of passengers and goods. The third session of its Facilitation Division met from 21 November to 7 December 1951 in Buenos Aires. It reviewed the progress achieved with regard to the implementation of annex 9 and considered amendments to this annex and facilitation questions in general.^{1/} The recommendations for amending annex 9

^{1/} See ICAO document 7217-FAL/557.

cover many questions. Those which refer in particular to visas and frontier formalities for persons are discussed in document E/CN.2/124.

The Division favoured the establishment of special committees of regional groups of States for the study and promotion of facilitation of air travel. It was particularly recommended that European States members of ICAO form such a committee in order to provide maximum facilities with minimum requirements. It recommended also that States publish a booklet setting out entry and departure formalities and that copies be made available for general circulation to air passengers. The Council of ICAO on 28 March 1952 expressed agreement with these proposals.

A further recommendation that as a complement to such a booklet the appropriate organ of the United Nations be approached with a view to the publication of a document setting out the up-to-date visa requirements of States is discussed in document E/CN.2/124.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

In document E/CN.2/103/Add.1 it was reported that the Executive Board of UNESCO approved at its twenty-fifth session, held from 25 to 27 January at Paris, a study examining the possibility of concluding an international convention providing certain facilities to persons travelling for educational, scientific or cultural purposes.^{2/} This study was submitted to the sixth session of UNESCO's General Conference, held from 18 June to 7 July 1951 at Paris. This Conference adopted a resolution authorizing the Director-General to formulate, in consultation with the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the competent international organizations, a first draft of an international instrument with a view to removing obstacles to the movement between countries of persons travelling for educational, scientific or cultural purposes. This draft would subsequently be studied by a committee of government experts which would establish a text for submission to the General Conference. The Executive Board, at its 29th session, considering the procedure for implementing this resolution, decided to seek first by

^{2/} See UNESCO document 25 EX/13.

means of a questionnaire the views of member States on the form and content of the draft. It envisaged that the above-mentioned meeting of government experts would take place at the end of 1953 and the text would be considered by the General Conference at its eighth session, to be held in 1954.

In order to alleviate foreign exchange difficulties impeding travel for educational, scientific and cultural purposes, UNESCO has undertaken the preparation of a travel coupon scheme. To enable persons who travel abroad for cultural purposes to obtain sufficient foreign currency such persons would under this scheme be able to buy in their national currencies travel coupons which are redeemable abroad in the currency of the country visited. The necessary foreign currency would partly be provided by UNESCO and partly obtained from the sales of such coupons.

The plans for this scheme will be submitted for approval to UNESCO's seventh General Conference, meeting in November 1952.

World Health Organization (WHO). The revised text of the International Sanitary Regulations which had been adopted by the Expert Committee on International Epidemiology and Quarantine of the WHO during its third session (E/CN.2/103), was submitted to the fourth session of the World Health Assembly, held in May 1951. This Assembly adopted the new regulations which will come into force on 1 October 1952.^{3/}

The new regulations, which will consolidate and replace 16 existing international sanitary conventions, provide inter alia for an improved organization of sanitary facilities for all means of international transport and simplified text and forms of international certificates of vaccination.

2. Non-governmental organizations

International Air Transport Association (IATA). Questions concerning the facilitation of international air travel were considered by the Facilitation Sub-Committee of IATA's Traffic Committee, which held its seventh meeting from 3 to 10 July 1951 at Caracas, Venezuela. The meeting

^{3/} See International Sanitary Regulations; World Health Organization regulation No. 2.

reviewed inter alia the situation with regard to the implementation of ICAO's annex 9 and agreed to press for favourable consideration of the standardization of the format of visas at the third session of the ICAO FAL Division (see also document E/CN.2/124). It also discussed progress made with regard to the pre-examination and pre-inspection of international air passengers and their luggage.

International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO). The main developments with regard to the IUOTO since the previous report on Travel Questions (E/CN.2/103) were the holding of the sixth General Assembly, from 7 to 12 October 1951 in Athens, Greece, and the establishment of the Asian and Far Eastern Travel Commission (AFETC) during a meeting, held in New Delhi, India, on 24 and 25 March 1952. The seventh General Assembly is being held at Naples, Italy from 7 to 11 October 1952. The members of the Transport and Communications Commission will be informed of the results of that session in an addendum to the present paper.

The sixth General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions and decisions covering the activities of the commissions of the IUOTO and related matters.^{4/}

With regard to regional activities, it commented on the work of the European and the African Travel Commissions, noted a report on travel development in Asia and the Far East prepared by the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, requested the Organization of American States to consider at an early stage the proposed statutes of the Inter-American Travel Commission and decided to undertake the preparatory work for the establishment of a regional commission for the Middle East.

The General Assembly commented upon the work of the Commission on the Elimination of Travel Barriers, which had reported upon the questions of free circulation of tourist propaganda films, taxes falling on tourism,

^{4/} See Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of National Travel Organizations and General Assembly of the International Union of Official Travel Organizations.

currency controls, passports, visas and frontier formalities, free circulation of tourist propaganda material and language label badges for workers in the tourist industry. The Commission was instructed to continue studies on these questions.

The third report of the Study Commission on International Travel Statistics, covering 1949, was noted and it was recommended to bring it to the attention of the appropriate bodies of the United Nations.

Progress with regard to the **compilation** of a travel bibliography to be submitted to the next General Assembly was reviewed and measures were recommended promoting the exchange of tourist personnel and the training and classification of tourist guides.

The statutes for an International Travel Research Institute, sponsored by the IUOTO, were adopted and arrangements made for putting it into operation.

After reviewing the work of the Travel Plant Commission, it was decided to study further the question of an international standard classification for hotels and restaurants, to examine the possibility of preparing a report on the situation of the hotel industry on an internationally comparable basis and to establish standards regulating hygienic conditions in supplementary accommodations.

Commenting upon the work of the Commission on Travel Development, the Assembly noted its conclusions on low-cost travel and accepted the **reports** on publicity, advertising, public relations and **informational activities**, on specialized interest travel, on methods and techniques of travel **market** analysis and development and the recommendations covering the **standardization** of travel poster dimensions.

The Asian and Far Eastern Travel Commission (AFETC) of the IUOTO was established at a meeting held on 24 March 1952 at New Delhi, India. The Commission is composed of official travel organizations of Australia, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, and Viet-Nam. It is taking over the travel promotion work hitherto performed by ECAFE's secretariat, and has adopted the following work programme:

- (1) Collection and dissemination of information on the present status of tourism in the countries of the region.
- (2) Simplification and standardization of frontier formalities.
- (3) Publication of information on frontier formalities.
- (4) Training facilities for hotel personnel.
- (5) Classification of hotels.
- (6) Travel statistics.
- (7) Monthly publication of "Asian Travelways".
- (8) Exchange of tourist publicity material.
- (9) Extension of "tourist class" system to trans-Pacific flights.
- (10) Reduction of passenger fares on special occasions.

B. Regional activities

1. United Nations regional economic commissions

Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). The ECAFE Secretariat continued its activities in the field of travel pending establishment of a regional organization by the IUOTO in accordance with the resolution adopted by ECAFE during its seventh session (E/CN.2/103 and E/CN.2/103/Add.1).

A handbook on travel formalities was prepared and issued, containing information concerning government regulations governing international travel. Additional and revised information is being published in supplements in order to keep the contents of the Handbook up to date. The Committee on Industry and Trade, reviewing during its fourth session (Rangoon, Burma, 10-26 January 1952) inter alia activities relating to travel, emphasized the usefulness of the handbook (E/CN.11/314). It also noted that the IUOTO would convene the first meeting of its Regional Commission in New Delhi during March 1952 and supported the transfer of a substantial part of the work on tourist promotion to this body. It favoured continued attention to questions of official travel regulations by ECAFE's secretariat.

Action of the Committee in this field was approved by the eighth session of the Commission, held from 29 January to 8 February 1952 at Rangoon, Burma (E/CN.11/342).

/As mentioned

As mentioned above in the section on the IUOTO, the latter established a Regional Travel Commission for Asia and the Far East at a meeting in Delhi on 24 March 1952, which took over as from 1 August 1952 the travel and tourist promotion work hitherto carried on by the ECAFE Secretariat, including publication of the Handbook on travel facilities.

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The conclusion of the International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Passengers and Baggage by Rail under the auspices of the Inland Transport Committee of the ECE is discussed in document E/CN.2/124.

The question of modernization of long-distance passenger train facilities has also been taken up by the Inland Transport Committee's Sub-Committee on Rail Transport which requested the International Railway Union to study the possibility of improving the amenities for night journeys, the standardization of supplements for sleeping berths, the reduction of the number of classes of carriage and the improvement of the lighting and sanitary installations on trains (E/ECE/TRANS/177). The Sub-Committee, at its seventh session, noted the modernization already achieved and expressed its interest in a more general study, which the UIC has undertaken in this field (E/ECE/TRANS/353).

2. Other regional bodies

Caribbean Tourist Association (CTA). In reviewing the activities of the Caribbean Interim Tourism Committee (CITC) (E/CN.2/103), it was reported that the establishment of a permanent Caribbean Travel Development Association was envisaged by 1 January 1952.

At a meeting held from 19 to 21 May 1951 at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, attended by representatives from Antigua, Aruba, Curacao, and the Netherlands West Indies, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe and Martinique, Haiti, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and the Virgin Islands of the United States, the Caribbean Tourist Association was established.^{5/} The Constitution and By-Laws of the latter organization

^{5/} See report of Caribbean Tourist Association; First Annual General Meeting.

/were approved.

were approved. They provide inter alia that active membership will consist of official tourist promotion organizations or, in lieu thereof, the appropriate government agencies and that carriers' organizations, firms or individuals within the area having direct or indirect interest in travel can become allied members.

The meeting which dealt mainly with internal matters of the new association decided to establish the headquarters of the CTA for the time being on Antigua.

Pacific Interim Travel Association. At a conference held from 12 to 15 January 1952 at Honolulu, Hawaii, on the invitation of representatives from Alaska, Australia, Canada, Fiji, Guam, Hawaiian Islands, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, Samoa, Tahiti, the United States, and from a number of international carriers, decided to establish the "Pacific Interim Travel Association".^{6/}

The Constitution of the new Association provides for an active membership, consisting of official organizations for the promotion of tourism or, in lieu thereof, of the appropriate government agencies and of governmentally recognized air or surface carriers serving the Pacific area. It also provides for allied membership consisting of organizations, firms or individuals domiciled within the Pacific area and having a direct or indirect interest in travel.

Besides dealing with organizational problems, the Conference adopted a number of resolutions concerning tourist facilities and governmental facilitation. One of these recommends the establishment of liaison with the United Nations in compiling data on functional tourist travel facilities, such information to be used to evaluate the accommodation problem and to measure future needs in this field. Another resolution calls for the compiling of up-to-date travel information, including personal entry and customs requirements, and the possible publication of such information. The resolution on governmental facilitation calls for the simplification of visa and frontier formalities for tourists.

^{6/} See report on Pacific Area Travel Conference, 12-15 January 1952.