


**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

*Fiftieth Session*  
OFFICIAL RECORDS

Tuesday, 4 May 1971,  
at 10.40 a.m.

NEW YORK

*President: Mr. Rachid DRISS (Tunisia).*

**AGENDA ITEM 9**
**Transport development (continued):**
**(b) Preparation for the United Nations/IMCO Conference on International Container Traffic (continued) (E/4963, E/L.1380, E/L.1388, E/L.1391)**

1. Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan) said that the Council should begin by considering the note by the Secretary-General (E/4963), which described the measures already taken for the preparation of the Conference. The Council had approved the organization of the Conference but since there were as yet no detailed directives on the subject consultations were now taking place. Pakistan, which had supported the decision to hold the Conference, was concerned over the limited character of those consultations in which few regional bodies and few African and Asian countries were able to participate. His delegation, having received the documentation on the Conference only the week before, had not had time to examine it in detail, particularly since Pakistan lacked specialists on containerization. His delegation therefore approved the United States representative's proposal that the Council should have a memorandum distributed on the documentation concerning IMCO's preparations and should set up a preparatory group to study both that documentation and the agenda for the Conference.

2. With reference to the question raised by the representative of Brazil, i.e. the TCM Convention, he said that his delegation approved of resolution 17 (V) of the UNCTAD Committee on Shipping recommending that the Economic and Social Council should be invited to consider undertaking a study on the economic implications of the TCM Convention, in particular for developing countries, but it had doubts concerning the way in which that study should be carried out. The United States representative had suggested that it should be done by a group of consultants, while his delegation thought that it should be undertaken by the UNCTAD Committee on Shipping.

3. His delegation was not opposed to the Brazilian draft resolution (E/L.1391), but it reserved the right to discuss it after it had been introduced.

**AGENDA ITEM 10**
**Public administration and development (E/4950 and Add.1, E/4989, chap. VI, sect. B)**

4. The PRESIDENT noted that the Council had before it the report of the Secretary-General on public administra-

tion in the Second United Nations Development Decade (E/4950). That report had been examined by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its eighth session and the Committee's views and recommendations appeared in paragraphs 47 to 59 of its report (E/4989).

5. He also informed the members of the Council that the report of Second Meeting of the Group of Experts on the United Nations programme in Public Administration, which had met from 18 to 26 January 1971, had been circulated under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (E/4950/Add.1).<sup>1</sup>

6. Mr. WU (Director, Public Administration Division) noted that the United Nations public administration programme differed from most other important programmes in that no committee or commission had the task of examining it and the Secretary-General had to rely on meetings of experts to review the programme, the results of which were considered by CPC and the Economic and Social Council. He then drew attention of the members of the Council to the report of the Second Meeting of Experts on the United Nations programme in Public Administration, particularly annexes II, III and IV. The report reviewed the progress achieved under the United Nations programme in public administration since the First Meeting of Experts in January 1967.<sup>2</sup> In accordance with the Council's instructions, emphasis in the programme had been placed on training, which had long been one of the priority areas. Progress had been made with regard to various other aspects of the management of public administration services, and the Division had, in particular, helped the developing countries to work out methods of improving their performance. In addition, the Division had given increasing attention to other aspects of administration in fields where multidisciplinary activities were called for: administration of urbanization, administrative aspects of the environment, family planning, and so forth. The public administration programme consisted of two parts: technical co-operation to developing countries; and the programme of the Division at Headquarters.

7. The programme directly for countries was intended to help them improve their administrative capacities. The Division's efforts were directed in particular toward projects of developing countries which were related to the over-all development of the countries. Officials at the entrance and intermediate levels and senior officials had to be trained. The projects carried out since 1967 required much more attention from the Headquarters staff than had been the case of the earlier projects with their more sophisticated objectives. While the Public Administration

<sup>1</sup> *Public Administration in the Second United Nations Development Decade* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.71.II.H.3).

<sup>2</sup> For the report, see document E/4296-ST/TAO/M/38.



Division was primarily concerned with the general aspects of public administration, the specialized agencies were responsible for the organization and administration of specific development functions in their spheres of competence. For example, the ILO was concerned with labour administration and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with agricultural administration. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) each set up a public administration unit responsible for carrying out programmes in that field. Under Council resolution 1199 (XLII), UNDP (Special Fund) was the main source for the financing of a large number of projects.

8. The second part of the programme, namely, the programme of the Division at Headquarters, had two aspects: to supervise the country projects executed in the field, and to carry out research, comparative studies, seminars, etc. in the field of public administration. Public administration was a comparatively new field of activity which was in the process of development, and on many subjects there were no manuals or other authoritative works to which the Division could refer. For illustrations, that part of the programme included advanced training for senior officials of the public service in the developing countries, training of trainers, major administrative reforms and the improvement of urban administration.

9. The programme was based on the requests of Governments and did not go beyond their needs as stated by them.

10. In conclusion, he stressed that the Division had become more efficient and that its activities were now directed toward more useful projects and more immediate needs.

11. Mr. ODERO-JOWI (Kenya) outlined the provisions of the draft resolution<sup>3</sup> which he felt that the Council should adopt on public information during the Second United Nations Development Decade. The adoption of that text would be the logical outcome of the various measures taken by the Secretary-General and the United Nations bodies concerned in pursuance of Council resolution 1199 (XLII) and General Assembly resolution 2561 (XXIV). He recalled that, in accordance with those resolutions, the Secretary-General had prepared, in close collaboration with the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned, a report on the proposed objectives and programmes in public administration for the Second Development Decade, and had convened the Second Meeting of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration to consider those proposals, which are contained in annex II of its report. The proposals and recommendations of the experts had subsequently been considered by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its eighth session.

12. The important role of public administration in the framework of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV)) for accelerating economic and social development could not be over-empha-

sized. The General Assembly, in paragraph 78 of the Strategy, had asked the developing countries to "pay special attention to the orientation and organization of their public administration at all levels for both the effective formulation and implementation of their development plans". He, as the representative of a developing country, was fully aware of the urgent need to improve public administration and of the fact that many countries would require a real "administrative revolution" to achieve the radical changes they sought in the Second Development Decade. His delegation fully concurred with the Secretary-General's view that the challenge to public administration arose from three facts: that Governments had a central role in promoting economic and social development, that administrative capability needed to be strengthened at all levels of government and that public administration had to adapt itself to changes if it was to be an effective instrument for progress.

13. While the initiative and most of the effort had to come from the developing countries themselves, the United Nations and the specialized agencies still had a useful role to play in helping countries to develop their public administration systems. Indeed, multilateral assistance was often preferable to bilateral assistance because of its ability to draw upon the experience of countries having different systems.

14. In the operative part of the draft resolution the attention of Member States would be drawn to the importance of measures to increase administrative capability: such measures should form an integral part of development plans at all levels. Elsewhere in the draft the Council would note with appreciation the co-operation and co-ordination prevailing among all the departments and bodies concerned. In another operative paragraph the Council would recommend that the Secretary-General's proposals for public administration for the Second Decade should be taken into account by the governing bodies of all United Nations organizations and interested non-governmental organizations concerned when they were programming activities in that field. The Council would also approve the work programme for the Public Administrative Division for 1971-1975, subject to the comments made on it by the Meeting of Experts and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. The Council would also recommend that the third Meeting of Experts should be held in 1975, an arrangement which would enable the experts not only to review the United Nations public administration programme but also to contribute to the mid-term review of progress in implementing the administrative aspects of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. In the concluding paragraph, the Council would transmit the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session.

15. He cited as an example of the effectiveness of the United Nations programme a Special Fund project being carried out in East Africa for the development of local railway transport and harbour enterprises. The way in which the project was being managed proved beyond dispute that the United Nations and similar organizations were unique in their ability to help the developing countries in the field of public administration because of the diversity of experience on which they could draw.

<sup>3</sup> Subsequently circulated as draft resolution E/L.1392.



16. He suggested that, since a second draft resolution was to be introduced on the same subject, the sponsors should endeavour to prepare a single draft resolution.
17. Mr. LISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in recent years the international community had come to recognize that the public administration work of the United Nations was one of its most important activities. Public administration was extremely important in solving the problems of economic and social development, and was essential in securing rapid development, which was particularly vital for developing countries.
18. The experience of the socialist countries demonstrated the vital role of public administration in the elimination of economic backwardness, in industrialization, and in accelerating the pace of economic growth. At the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Kosygin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers had, in announcing the guidelines for the new five-year plan, emphasized the measures to improve public administration and asserted that the degree to which the administrative structure could be improved would largely determine the country's progress.
19. It was for such reasons that the Soviet Union was co-operating, under bilateral agreements, with many developing countries with a view to transferring to them a body of knowledge on public administration. Those agreements covered practical projects, for example, those dealing with improving the management system of enterprises established under technical assistance from the Soviet Union and the training of national officials in various sectors of the administration. Soviet Union experts also visited countries to help them to build up their systems of public administration.
20. The Soviet Union also participated in international programmes. Its experts had attended seminars organized by the United Nations, and one USSR expert had participated in drawing up the Division's work programme.
21. His delegation supported the work programme and would co-operate fully with the Division. It was especially interested in the parts of the programme which dealt with the management of the public sector, the organization of national economic planning and the establishment of national systems of management training.
22. The report before the Council rightly pointed out that the subject of administration should be tackled at several levels—local, national and international. Similarly, the subject had to be dealt with as it affected the individual sectors of the national economy (such as industry, agriculture and science), each of which had its own characteristics and required a separate solution.
23. In view of the genuine scientific and technical revolution which was currently taking place, the improvement of public administration was not an operation which could be performed once and for all. On the contrary, it was a continuous process of improvement. The Division should accordingly bear in mind the need for constantly perfecting its current and future planning methods.
24. Of special importance in the Division's programme were the comparative studies which should be prepared in the form of educational texts or handbooks. In any event, the activities of the international agencies were of concern not only to the developing countries, but to all Member States of the United Nations.
25. There seemed to be a vital need to co-ordinate the programmes undertaken by the various specialized agencies. A number of constructive measures had been taken to that end over the past few years and specific examples could be given of such co-ordination efforts. One such example was provided by the co-operation between the Public Administration Division and UNESCO regarding the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development, and the Joint United Nations/ILO project for the training of specialists in transport administration. However, there were still cases of duplication and overlapping which resulted in a waste of time and resources. For example, UNESCO's programme made provision for a symposium in 1972 on modern management methods in public administration, although the United Nations Secretariat had already organized an interregional seminar on that question in 1970.
26. A number of agencies had set up special bodies with a view to co-ordinating their various programmes. The Division should follow that example and set up a board composed of the heads of departments concerned.
27. With regard to the work programme which the Public Administration Division planned to carry out in the period 1971-1975, his delegation had no substantive comments to make. However, it noted that the programme provided for a study of corruption in the public administrations of developing countries. No doubt there were defects in the workings of various public administrations but in general it could be seen that such shortcomings had to do with the question of national sovereignty. What the developing countries needed was not revelations concerning their administrations, but assistance and support.
28. It was also hard to see the need, in the proposed programme, for a study of the special administrative problems involved in extending services to nomads. The question was of interest only to a very small number of countries and was distinctly national in character. The limited resources of the United Nations should be spent on studies presenting a wider interest.
29. The Soviet Union would continue to intensify its efforts within the United Nations to ensure co-operation towards development in the field of public administration. However, it was hard to understand why the Secretariat should show such discrimination against the USSR and the other socialist countries. The attention of the members of the Council and of the Director of the Public Administration Division should be drawn to the fact that data prepared by the Division were not published in Russian and that the seminars on public administration did not employ Russian as a working language. Experts from the socialist countries, who had gained considerable experience in public administration, were not to be found among the large number of experts sent to the developing countries with funds from the United Nations budget. It would be



interesting to know the reasons for that discrimination. The Secretariat should take those factors into consideration and remove the obstacles preventing participation by Soviet experts.

30. Mr. MOJSOV (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation had followed the work of the Public Administration Division with keen interest and was happy to note the results achieved. Yugoslavia had actively supported the realization of the Division's work programme from the outset, and Yugoslav experts had participated in the symposia organized by the Division. In 1969 Yugoslavia had acted as host to a symposium on public enterprise management improvement. Some Yugoslav experts had joined the teams of experts formed under the Special Fund project for public administration. Yugoslavia would continue to assist in the implementation of the work programme of the Public Administration Division.

31. During the period under review, inherited administrative systems and outlooks had continued to exercise a negative influence on the economic and social development of the developing countries. Those countries wished to modernize their public administration and therefore looked to the United Nations and to various developed countries for technical assistance in that sector. The modernization of the national public administration and the improvement of its administrative capacity were highly important in the present phase of development. The work programme proposed for the Second United Nations Development Decade was in line with the basic principles of the United Nations and suited to the needs of the developing countries. The programme, which had been discussed at length in January by experts from developed and developing countries, reflected recommendations that were designed to increase the effectiveness of administration in the developing countries.

32. It should be emphasized that the Public Administration Division of the United Nations and the sections that dealt with public administration in the regional economic commissions needed to have an adequate number of competent experts. Activities under the work programme had steadily grown and expanded. At the same time, the needs for expert assistance in the developing countries had become more sophisticated. The need to recruit experts had thus become more pressing. Recruitment was not always an easy task, but it was to be hoped that specialists could be recruited in time to prevent a delay in the execution of projects. Every effort must be made to ensure that the experts recruited had the necessary technical skills and extensive legal experience. In the interests of the rational utilization of investments and the avoidance of duplication, organizations within the United Nations system should co-ordinate their public administration activities with those of the Public Administration Division. The Division had considerable experience that could be of benefit to the developing countries. The Yugoslav delegation was ready to endorse the proposed work programme of the Division for the period 1971-1975.

33. Mr. MOBARAK (Lebanon) thanked the Director of the Public Administration Division for his statement. The Lebanese delegation supported the United Nations programme in the field of public administration. It must be

realized that public administration had an important role to play in the process of economic and social development. That role would become increasingly prominent and public administration would have a special responsibility in the effective formulation and implementation of national development plans. The Second Meeting of Experts in public administration had ended on 26 January 1971. In the report transmitted to the Secretary-General the experts had noted that in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (resolution 2626 (XXV)), the General Assembly had asked the developing countries to pay special attention to the orientation and organization of their public administration at all levels for both the effective formulation and implementation of their development plans. The experts had also noted that the Secretary-General's report on objectives and programmes took the International Development Strategy as the frame of reference and called attention to the urgent need for the improvement of public administration in order to enable the developing countries to achieve the economic and social targets set by the General Assembly. The experts had also considered that many developing countries would need an administrative revolution to bring about necessary changes in the economic and social fields during the Second Decade. The extent to which Governments performed their tasks in the promotion of economic and social development would depend largely on the rate of progress in developing administrative capability at all Government levels and in the main areas of development. Public administration must adjust to that trend if it wished to be an effective instrument of development. Experience gained during the First United Nations Development Decade showed the importance of public administration to the success or failure of national efforts towards economic and social development. Administrative weaknesses or shortcomings had often been the main causes of the slow rate of progress in that field.

34. The diversity of administrative systems and of the situations in which they functioned meant that the priority problems which public administration would have to solve during the 1970s would often differ considerably from country to country. There were, however, certain traits common to a number of countries, and common elements of a solution to various administrative problems which have to be found.

35. The influence on public administration structures and efficiency and on national development were as varied as they were numerous. Ways had to be found of identifying those influences and of channelling them towards the economic and social objectives set by national authorities. It was evident that the methods followed differed considerably from one country to another and that certain administrative methods were preferable to others. Public administration must adapt itself to the pressing requirements of economic and social change. In their conclusions, the experts had expressed the hope that, when it considered their report, the Council would emphasize the strategic role of public administration in accelerating the pace of development. The Secretary-General had found the comments and recommendations of the Meeting of Experts to be most useful. The Lebanese delegation considered that the organizations in the United Nations system should collaborate



with each other at the Headquarters level, with the regional commissions at the regional level and with the UNDP resident directors at the country level, in order to help Governments improve the administration of major development activities and programmes. It also supported the proposal that UNDP give sympathetic consideration to requests of Governments for assistance in increasing their administrative capability for development. One could not but welcome the views expressed by the experts on programme content, research and comparative studies, interregional seminars and publications. It was encouraging to note that the number of requests for technical co-operation in public administration had steadily risen during the 1960s and was likely to increase further during the 1970s. Means for increasing the resources available for technical co-operation in public administration needed to be closely studied, as such an increase was necessary in view of the central role of public administration in national development efforts. In confronting an ever-changing situation, public administration must adapt itself constantly to new requirements if it was not to check the economic and social process of national development. His delegation supported the views of the representative of Kenya and also the draft resolution which he proposed to submit.

36. Mr. PATAKI (Hungary) said that his delegation had studied with interest the report of the Secretary-General (E/4950) and the report of the Second Meeting of Experts on the United Nations programme in Public Administration. The role of public administration and of Governments was highly important for development. Efficient public administration made a significant contribution to economic, technical and social progress, as the great successes of the socialist countries in those areas clearly proved. Their experience should serve as a guide in the

implementation of the programme outlined in the documents before the Council. The Secretary-General's report was a valuable contribution to the attainment of goals of the Second United Nations Development Decade. His delegation welcomed the integrated manner in which the objectives and programmes for the 1971-1975 period had been presented, and urged that United Nations Headquarters, the specialized agencies and the regional commissions co-operate efficiently so as to avoid any overlapping. The programme should be action-oriented and priorities should be set on that basis. That was especially important in view of the fact that at present many of the project descriptions did not make clear the magnitude of the effort needed to carry them out. The titles of the projects did not always reflect their real importance. The value and real usefulness of the programme would depend on the extent to which it could satisfy the real needs of improving public administration in the developing countries.

37. The Secretary-General's report contained proposals to expand the staff of the Public Administration Division. His delegation was not convinced that the implementation of the programme required a significant expansion either of the Public Administration Division at Headquarters or in the regional commissions. An examination of the programme proposed for 1971-1975 showed that a considerable number of the projects could be carried out with the help of various non-governmental organizations. The Division was already co-operating with interested scientific institutions. An increase in staff could be avoided if such co-operation were to be broadened under the programme proposed for the 1971-1975 period.

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*