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GENERAL

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## TRAVEL QUESTIONS: DEVELOPMENTS IN 1950 Supplementary Note by the Secretary-General

### II. ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL BODIES

#### A. World-Wide Activities

#### 1. Inter-Governmental Organizations

##### United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

In document E/CN.2/103 the activities of UNESCO with regard to the promotion of international travel were reviewed and it was mentioned that the Director General of UNESCO had been authorized to continue to study the question of barriers to the free movement of persons and to collaborate inter alia with the Transport and Communications Commission in order to seek certain facilities in connexion with international travel for persons engaged in educational activities. A preliminary study<sup>1/</sup> was subsequently prepared by the Director General of UNESCO and submitted to the twenty-fifth session of the Executive Board of UNESCO, held from 15 to 27 January 1951 at Paris. Its contents are summarized below.

After summarizing measures already effected, the study examines the possibility of concluding an international convention and makes certain suggestions with regard to

- (a) the categories of persons to whom the international convention would apply;
- (b) the facilities to be granted to such persons.

(a) The following list of persons, to benefit from the facilities if travelling for well-defined educational, scientific, or cultural purposes, is tentatively given.

<sup>1/</sup> Preliminary Study by the Director General on the Possibility of the Adoption of an International Instrument for the Reduction of Obstacles to the Free Movement of Persons Engaged in Educational, Scientific or Cultural Activities. UNESCO document 25 EX/13.

Professors, primary and secondary school teachers;  
Students, pupils of primary or secondary schools;  
Specialists, experts, research workers in the fields of education, science or culture;  
Librarians, senior museum staff, archivists;  
Persons practising the liberal professions, such as writers, architects, lecturers, engineers, artists, etc.;  
Holders of fellowships or internships of the United Nations or its Specialized Agencies;  
Persons participating in international conferences or meetings of an educational, scientific or cultural character sponsored by the United Nations or its Specialized Agencies;  
Social workers.

(b) Facilities which might be granted are provisionally suggested as follows: simplification of passport and visa formalities; transportation at reduced cost; more liberal allocation of foreign exchange and lifting of restrictions on gainful employment abroad; safeguarding the professional rights and the economic interest in the home country of the traveller during his absence; avoiding double taxation; lifting of restrictions on the access to institutions in foreign countries and on free movement in foreign countries.

With reference to simplification of passport and visa formalities the study states:

"Passport and visa regulations constitute one of the most serious obstacles to the free movement of persons travelling abroad.

"The comprehensive solution, recommended by the Expert Committee on Passports, Visas and Frontier Formalities which met in Geneva in 1947, would be to abolish passports and entry transit and exit visas. Short of so forthright a measure, consideration might be given to its application, as far as possible, to limited categories of persons appropriately identified and travelling for educational, scientific or cultural purposes.

"If no such solution can be contemplated in the near future, an attempt should be made to reduce the time and expense involved in obtaining passports and visas. The formalities for obtaining passports and visas might be simplified, and the fees involved reduced to the actual cost of issue incurred by the administrative authorities. Finally, passports and

visas might be made valid for the largest possible number of countries and for the maximum number of journeys."

With reference to transportation at reduced cost, the study states:

"The high cost of transport is a no less serious hindrance to the free movement of persons. Travel at reduced rates, the abolition of government taxes on tickets, and the possibility of paying for journeys in the currency of the country of origin would help to reduce these difficulties."

The preliminary study was approved by the Executive Board at its twenty-fifth session<sup>1/</sup> and will be transmitted to the sixth session of UNESCO's General Conference, convened at Paris on the 16th of June 1951.

#### B. Regional Activities

##### 1. United Nations Regional Economic Commissions

Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). The Committee on Industry and Trade of ECAFE adopted, at its third session held at Lahore, Pakistan from 15 to 23 February 1951, the recommendations for future action in the field of travel, prepared by the Executive Secretary of ECAFE (see Annex II, document E/CN.2/103), with the exception of the last recommendation.<sup>2/</sup>

The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, during its seventh session, held subsequently from 28 February to 7 March at Lahore, adopted a resolution approving substantially the recommendations contained in the Report of the third session of the Committee on Industry and Trade, including those dealing with travel questions.<sup>3/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> UNESCO document 25 EX/Decisions.

<sup>2/</sup> Document E/CN.11/267.

<sup>3/</sup> Document E/CN.11/L.14