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INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION ON WATER CONTROL AND UTILIZATION

Note by the United States of America

In the opinion of the United States, proper water control and utilization is one of the most important elements in developing those agricultural improvements, industries, public health and activities which contribute to the raising of living standards. Action in this field requires the contribution and co-ordination of many disciplines - irrigation, flood control, engineering, agricultural sciences and forestry; hydraulic, hydroelectric, navigation and other engineering sciences; geology, hydrology, climatology, meteorology; and many economic, social, health and cultural factors affecting the development of engineering programmes, and the standards of living of the people in areas concerned. As with other aspects of economic development, the greatest effort and direction must be made in the countries themselves, but international consultation and co-operation are also essential. Although segments of the problem are within the competence of various United Nations agencies, other inter-governmental and non-governmental technical organizations, there is no one place within the United Nations system where responsibility is centralized for promoting and co-ordinating international action.

Since many countries are greatly concerned with the need for better planning and utilization of water resources, there is a wide-spread demand from both governmental and non-governmental groups for appropriate international machinery to cope with particular aspects of the problem. The result may be that a fragmented, piecemeal pattern of international organization will be developed to meet segments of the problem, with no central co-ordinating machinery,

Portions of the problem are now being handled in various organizations, some inside and some outside of the United Nations system. For example, (1) the United Nations sponsored the Scientific Conference on Conservation and

Utilization of Resources (UNSCOUR), but has not yet developed a regular "follow-up" programme with respect to water control problems; (2) the United Nations has responsibility for technical assistance in the general field of "resource development," but so far this has not been developed on any integrated basis; (3) the Food and Agriculture Organization has competence with respect to irrigation, soils, fishery and forestry, but due to lack of funds its work in irrigation has been severely limited; (4) the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, after initiating a broad effort, has set up an appropriate research council for consideration of specific scientific problems of the arid zones, has sponsored an International Union of Engineering Societies, and is promoting scientific research in various fields related to this problem; (5) the World Health Organization has made technical studies showing the relationship between irrigation and drainage projects with pure water supply, and demonstrating the need for including consideration of health problems such as malaria and schistosomiasis in connexion with water control programmes; (6) the World Meteorological Organization will have competence with respect to meteorology, hydrology, and climatology; (7) the International Bank is prepared to make loans for development projects such as hydroelectric programmes, navigation facilities, irrigation systems, etc., if such projects are properly documented; (8) the Flood Control Bureau of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East is attacking certain aspects of the problem in its region; (9) the World Power Conference, the International Commission on Large Dams, the International Association of Hydraulic Research, the Permanent Association of Navigation Congresses and the International Commission on Irrigation and Canals are among the semi-governmental and non-governmental organizations active in this field.

At its Fifth Session, the General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/1524, Res. D) requesting the Secretary-General to make a report "on the practical measures adopted for the study of the problems of arid zones and on the technical and financial means employed by the specialized agencies for this purpose." The United States feels that this report should be enlarged so as to survey the entire field of water control and utilization; and that it should also cover the work of semi-governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as that of the specialized agencies.

/Accordingly,

Accordingly, the United States proposes the draft resolution, attached hereto, as Annex A, for the consideration of the Council.

ANNEX A

DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION ON WATER CONTROL AND UTILIZATION

The Economic and Social Council,

Considering the desirability that measures being taken internationally in the general field of water control and utilization be co-ordinated, and that such co-ordination should be undertaken within the United Nations system, and

Considering that the General Assembly, in Resolution A/1524D has recommended that the Secretary-General prepare for the examination of this Council, a report on the practical measures adopted for the study of the problems of arid zones and on the technical and financial means employed by the specialized agencies for this purpose,

Requests the Secretary-General, in preparing this report, to take into consideration the entire field of water control and utilization rather than the field of arid zones alone, and, at the same time, to cover the work being done by all the international organizations in the field, whether governmental, semi-governmental or non-governmental.
