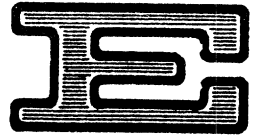




E/A

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA

JUN 06 1989



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

SECRETARY + DOCUMENT SECTION

Distr.
GENERAL
E/ESCWA/C.1/15/12
10 May 1989
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

Technical Committee
Sixth session
13-15 May 1989
Baghdad

Item 12(b) of the provisional agenda

**SUMMARY OF THE PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS AND ESTIMATES OF
THE DAMAGE RESULTING FROM THE RAINS AND FLOODS THAT STRUCK
DEMOCRATIC YEMEN BETWEEN 19 MARCH AND 7 APRIL 1989**

Note by the Executive Secretary



1. In response to the appeal made by the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen on 3 April 1989 to the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for aid and assistance to overcome the economic and social consequences of the catastrophic rains and flash-floods that began on 19 March 1989 and affected large areas of the country, ESCWA decided to send a social affairs officer to Aden for a period of four days in order to hold discussions with the government authorities and with the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in his capacity as overall co-ordinator of United Nations activities in that country, and then to report back to the Commission at its fifteenth session, to be held in Baghdad from 13 to 18 May 1989.
2. The representative of ESCWA arrived in Aden on 20 April 1989 and held discussions with a large number of the relevant government officials, headed by Mr. Salih Mansur Al-Siyeli, Member of the Politburo of the Yemeni Socialist Party, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior and Chairman of the High Commission to Combat the Rain and Flood Damage. The ESCWA representative also held discussions with Mr. Naji Othman, Governor of Aden; Mr. Abdullah Sa'id Abadan, Deputy Minister of Planning; Mr. Ja'far Hamid, Deputy Minister of Sectoral Planning and Member of the High Commission to Combat the Rain and Flood Damage; Mr. Salah Al-Matari, Secretary of the High Commission to Combat the Rain and Flood Damage; Mr. Fikret Akcura, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP; and Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Salman, Ambassador of Democratic Yemen to Iraq, who deserves praise for his great efforts to ensure the success of the mission. Discussions were also held with Mr. Salih Mohammed Al-Hallaqi, member of the local people's council of Aden Governorate, governor of Al-Sha'b province, in Aden Governorate, and chairman of the disaster relief committee in that province.
3. From the discussions with the competent government authorities and the Deputy Resident Representative, and on the basis of available information, it was learned that the torrential rains had been unparalleled, even compared with those of 1982. Beginning on 19 March 1989, they had continued intermittently until 10 April. The resulting floods led to serious and extensive damage in most governorates of the country, and especially in Hadramawt, Shabwah, Al-Mahrah, Lahij, Abyan and Aden (see annex I to this report). They caused loss of human life, destroyed livestock and severely damaged irrigation works, crops, roads, dams, dwellings, public and private institutions, electrical installations, consumer, agricultural and fishing co-operatives, canals, water-wheels, earthworks and farm installations. Extensive damage was also done to the Hanan dam, near Ahwar, in Abyan Governorate, and to embankments in that locality. In addition, the dam near the ancient town of Shibam was breached, causing extensive damage to the town's historical and cultural landmarks. Furthermore, the floods ruined some 60 per cent of the wheat and tobacco harvest in Hadramawt Governorate, in addition to large quantities of cotton, potatoes, onions, garlic and other vegetables and fruit.
4. Owing to the magnitude of the disaster and the isolation of regions cut off by the destruction of roads, the High Commission to Combat the Rain and Flood Damage has been unable to assess the extent of the damage. It should be noted that the Government is doing everything within its power to deliver emergency supplies by helicopter to the flood victims in these isolated regions. It is also making intense efforts to carry out a detailed and complete assessment of the damage, which will be distributed as soon as it has been prepared.

5. Despite the limited resources at its disposal, the Government took urgent measures to limit the extent of the disaster. It set up the High Commission to Combat the Rain and Flood Damage, chaired by Mr. Al-Siyeli, Member of the Politburo of the Yemeni Socialist Party, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior. The membership consists of representatives of each of the following ministries and institutions: the Ministries of Construction and Housing, Finance, Agriculture, Health, Planning, Defence and Foreign Affairs, the Department of Local Government, the Yemeni Red Crescent Society and the Central Aid Agency. The High Commission was set up under resolution No. 1 of 1989, issued by the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council, and was entrusted with the following main tasks:

(a) Assessment of the damage arising from the rains and floods in all areas of the country;

(b) Receipt of aid and supervision of its distribution to the public in the afflicted regions;

(c) Alleviation of damage;

(d) The opening of channels for donations from citizens within the country and abroad;

(e) The taking of external initiatives vis-à-vis fraternal and friendly countries and regional and international organizations with an eye to offers of aid in cash and in kind.

6. Since its establishment, the High Commission has formed sub-committees at the governorate, provincial and district levels. Popular committees have also been set up, with the task of distributing aid to victims and undertaking voluntary work to organize shelters. Thanks to the efforts of these sub-committees and popular committees, it has been possible to get the aid rapidly to the stricken areas by organizing direct, round-the-clock transport from the capital, Aden. Emergency food and medical supplies were transported by helicopter to areas which the disaster had rendered inaccessible by other means. Helicopter transport was concentrated especially on Wadi al-Masilah in Al-Mahrah Governorate, which sustained heavy damage. At the time of writing this report, the Commission had not yet been able to assess most of the damage resulting from this disaster.

7. Owing to the magnitude of this grievous disaster, which is expected to be more damaging than that of 1982, and despite its intense efforts, the Government, at the time of writing this report, had been unable to ascertain more than a fraction of the total expected damage. This is because its efforts were concentrated first and foremost on distributing relief supplies by helicopter to the stricken areas, and then on limiting the effects of the damage by making available the necessary material and human potential. It should therefore be noted that the initial estimates of damage available as of 7 April 1989 and set forth below are provisional and comprise only the damage that had been assessed by that date. The damage that had been identified by the government authorities and on which information was available at the time of writing this report may be summarized as follows:

- (a) 23 people were killed;
- (b) 53 people were injured and 80,000 made homeless; all told, 260,000 persons were affected in some way;
- (c) 4,214 dwellings were totally or partially destroyed;
- (d) 377 public institutions (government departments, co-operatives, etc.), including 35 schools and 15 health centres and units were destroyed;
- (e) Flash-floods eroded 48,464 feddans (acres) of land, of which 17,967 feddans of farm soil were totally eroded, including 8,415 feddans of crops;
- (f) 34,688 fruit trees, including 3,200 coffee trees, were destroyed;
- (g) 400 irrigation pumps, 513 artesian and open wells and 320 agricultural and other machines were destroyed;
- (h) 1,124 km of paved and unpaved roads were destroyed;
- (i) 5,467 head of livestock were lost and 1,028 beehives were damaged;
- (j) Serious and extensive damage was caused to the Hanan and Shibam dams;
- (k) 60 per cent of the wheat and tobacco crops in Hadramawt Governorate was ruined;
- (l) Large but as yet unspecified quantities of the cotton, vegetable and fruit crops were ruined.

8. As shown in annex II to this report, most of the deaths occurred in Hadramawt Governorate; most of the dwellings, institutions and fruit trees destroyed were in Hadramawt and Al-Mahrah Governorates; most of the farm soil washed away by flash-floods was in Lahij and Abyan Governorates; most of the wells and pumps destroyed were in Hadramawt and Lahij Governorates; most of the livestock lost was in Lahij, Al-Mahrah and Shabwah Governorates; and most of the roads destroyed were in Hadramawt Governorate.

9. After having done all within its power to provide emergency relief supplies and having harnessed all its available potential to prevent further casualties and damage, the Government contacted the UNDP Resident Representative on 25 March 1989 and called upon him officially, in his capacity as the co-ordinator of United Nations activities in Democratic Yemen, to request all United Nations agencies, including the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO), to extend immediate and urgent aid to relieve the flood victims in Democratic Yemen.

10. A number of fraternal and friendly countries, as well as a number of local, regional and international organizations, immediately responded to the appeals made by the Government and UNDRO; some of them sent emergency relief supplies (food, medical supplies, blankets, tents, etc.) and others promised financial and material aid. As can be seen from annex III to this report, the

total value of aid sent or pledged through UNDRO by 15 April was 1,162,842 United States dollars. Other aid is expected to be sent directly to the Government; this is material and financial aid which is primarily humanitarian, in order to provide basic relief supplies to victims in the stricken areas. Whatever the size of this aid, it will cover only a fraction of the amount needed to alleviate the serious and extensive damage resulting from the disaster. This humanitarian aid has helped to provide shelter speedily for the homeless and to offer emergency relief; these are but initial, temporary measures. The problem is still the need for material and financial aid in order to rehabilitate and reconstruct the damage-stricken areas, especially to rehabilitate nearly 50,000 feddans, to rebuild over 4,000 dwellings and to repair over 1,000 km of roads, in addition to repairing dams, canals and irrigation works, reconstructing the schools, institutions and health centres, resowing the rehabilitated land and increasing production in order to compensate for what had been destroyed. Such rehabilitation requires large sums of money, which are beyond the means of a country like Democratic Yemen, which is classified by the United Nations as one of the least-developed countries.

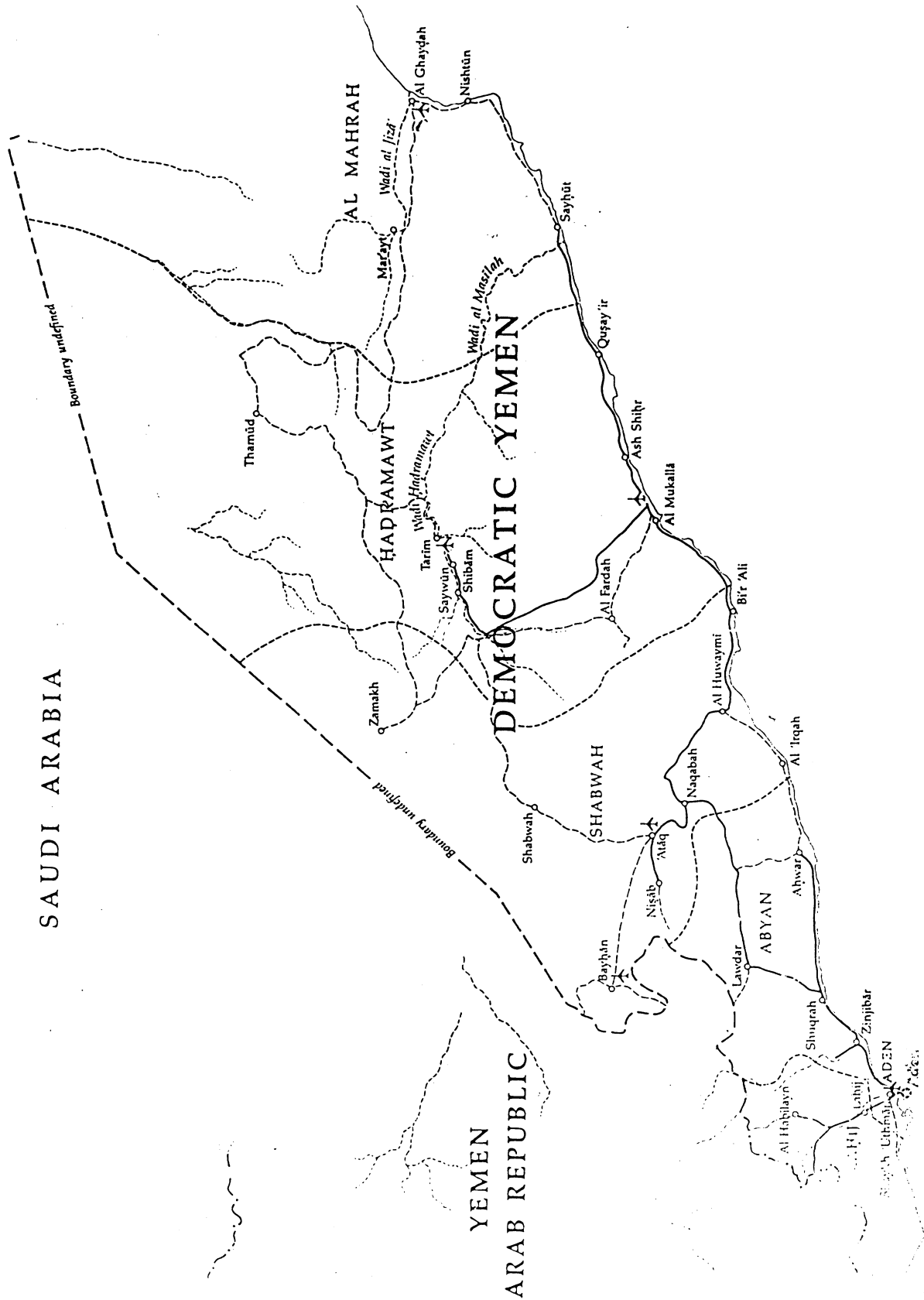
11. Whereas the government estimates of the losses and damage are expected to exceed those caused by the 1982 disaster, which had amounted to nearly 330 million Democratic Yemen dinars (the equivalent of \$US 960 million), it has become necessary to reactivate resolution 107(IX) entitled "International assistance to the flood-stricken areas of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen", adopted by ESCWA in 1982 (the full text of the resolution may be referred to in annex IV to this report), which stipulates, among other things, the following:

"[ESCWA] Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt a resolution calling for the urgent establishment of a programme, including the creation of a special fund, for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the flood-stricken areas of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, in line with the provisions of the Substantial New Programme of Action in favour of the Least Developed Countries;

"Urgently appeals to the member States of the United Nations and, in particular, the member States of the Commission, to expedite and facilitate the urgent establishment and implementation of the programme and to contribute generously to the proposed special fund."

12. As is apparent from the foregoing, in spite of the humanitarian aid that has been pledged, there is an urgent need to appeal to the international community to intensify efforts and initiatives to offer speedy and generous financial and material aid (building materials, machines, construction and agricultural equipment, well-digging equipment, etc.) in order to help Democratic Yemen to rehabilitate and reconstruct the stricken areas and consequently to resume agricultural production and rebuild its national economy.

Annex I



Annex II

**PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE DAMAGE RESULTING FROM THE RAINS AND FLOODS
 AS OF 7 APRIL 1989***

Type of damage	Unit of measurement	Total damage country-wide	Governorates					
			Aden	Lahij	Abyan	Shabwah	Hadramawt	Al-Mahrah
Dead	persons	23	-	3	3	2	14	1
Injured	persons	53	**	**	**	**	**	**
Dwellings destroyed	dwellings	4 214	209	157	322	495	1 911	1 120
Institutions destroyed	institutions	377	5	9	78	129	101	55
Farm land eroded	feddans	48 464	-	18 300	13 262	6 169	6 533	4 200
Totally eroded	feddans	17 967	-	2 271	8 175	1 593	3 728	2 200
Partially eroded	feddans	22 082	-	15 244	1 862	2 976	-	2 000
Crops ruined	feddans	8 415	-	785	3 225	1 600	2 805	-
Fruit trees uprooted	trees	34 688	-	5 642	-	2 254	8 192	18 600
Wells destroyed	wells	513	-	157	97	66	135	58
Irrigation pumps damaged	pumps	400	-	86	30	62	165	57
Machines damaged	machines	320	-	5	-	17	295	3
Livestock lost	head	5 467	-	1 883	580	1 328	-	1 676
Roads destroyed	kilometres	1 124	-	150	100	140	574	160
Dams damaged	dams	2	-	-	1	-	1	-
Homeless	persons	80 000	**	**	**	**	**	**
Beehives damaged	hives	1 028	-	-	1 028	-	-	-

* These preliminary estimates are based on information from the Ministries of the Interior and Planning, received by 7 April; there is other damage which the Government has not yet been able to assess.

** Figures as yet undetermined.

Annex III

PRELIMINARY LIST OF AGENCIES AND COUNTRIES THAT HAVE PLEDGED AID*

<u>Granting agency or country</u>	<u>Estimated value of aid</u>
<u>United Nations</u>	
- World Food Programme (WFP)	\$US 70,000
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	\$US 50,000
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	\$US 25,000
- Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO)	\$US 20,000
- World Health Organization (WHO)	\$US 10,000
<u>Governments and donating agencies</u>	
- Saudi Arabia (King Fahd)	SRls 30 million
- Italy	\$US 300,000
- Japan	\$US 100,000
- Yemen Arab Republic	YRls 300,000
- United Kingdom	\$US 333,330
- France	\$US 52,251
- Australia	\$US 75,000
- Federal Republic of Germany	\$US 30,000
- Sweden	SwF 64,550
- United States of America	\$US 20,000
- Qatar	\$US 10,000
- Norway	SwF 23,570
- Netherlands	SwF 8,710
- Arab Gulf Programme for the United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND)	\$US 250,000
- American company that does business with Arabs and wishes to remain anonymous	\$US 250,000
- Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund	\$US 100,000

Annex III (continued)

<u>Granting agency or country</u>	<u>Estimated value of aid</u>
- Through the Red Crescent Society (donations from Bahrain, Canada, German Democratic Republic, Oman, Spain, United Kingdom, USSR, Yemen Arab Republic)	\$US 169,009
- Elf Aquitaine and Total, France	\$US 100,000
- European Economic Community	\$US 28,000
- Chinese Red Cross	YRMB 50,000
- Japanese Red Cross	Y 37,000
- World Federation of Trade Unions	SwF 8,000
- Total branch office, Aden	YD 2,000
- Other donations from unspecified sources	\$US 100,000

* Notes:

1. This list does not necessarily include all the aid offered by the time of writing this report; it is subject to further precision and confirmation.
2. This preliminary list was drawn up on the basis of the information that could be obtained from government authorities and from the UNDP Office in Aden.
3. In addition to the aid enumerated in the above list, it has been learned that relief supplies (foodstuffs, medical supplies, tents, etc.) have been sent by Saudi Arabia, the Yemen Arab Republic, France, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Iraq and Djibouti. Furthermore, the Sudan has sent a medical team which is currently working in Hadramawt Governorate.

Annex IV

RESOLUTION 107(IX) ENTITLED "INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO THE FLOOD-STRICKEN AREAS OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN"^{1/}

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Noting with deep regret the extensive loss of human life and property and the destruction of economic and social infrastructures caused by three consecutive floods during 1981 and 1982 in all six governorates of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen,

Having heard the statement of the representative of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen on the efforts that are being made by the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to deal with the disaster; and having taken note of the report of the representative of the United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO),

Noting with appreciation the prompt assistance rendered by member States of the Commission and other countries, as well as by the United Nations system and other national and international organizations, in providing relief aid to the victims of the flood-stricken areas,

Noting further with appreciation Economic and Social Council resolution dated 28 April 1982, which urges all member States of the United Nations, international and regional organizations and voluntary agencies to participate in relief operations and to lend their support and assistance to programmes for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the flood-stricken areas,

Deeply concerned that, despite the immediate relief assistance offered so far, the magnitude of the damage caused by the floods and the reconstruction and rehabilitation requirements have confronted the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen with severe economic difficulties,

Considering that the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, being a least developed country, is unable to sustain the mounting burden of providing prompt and adequate food and shelter for the large number of homeless people and undertaking rehabilitation and reconstruction measures in the affected areas,

Considering also that the magnitude of the disaster is of such a scale that the development efforts and prospects of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen have been adversely affected,

1. Strongly supports the provisions of the Economic and Social Council resolution and urges the international community to intensify efforts towards their speedy implementation;

^{1/} For the discussion leading to the adoption of this resolution, see paras. 93-96 of the Report of the Tenth Session of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (8-12 May 1982), Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1982, Supplement No. 12 (E/1982/22-E/ECWA/157/Rev.1).

2. Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt a resolution calling for the urgent establishment of a programme, including the creation of a special fund, for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the flood-stricken areas of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, in line with the provisions of the Substantial New Programme of Action in favour of the Least Developed Countries;

3. Urgently appeals to the member States of the United Nations and, in particular, the member States of the Commission, to expedite and facilitate the urgent establishment and implementation of the programme and to contribute generously to the proposed special fund;

4. Requests the Executive Secretary to follow up on the implementation of this resolution and submit a report to the tenth session of the Commission.