

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PROPOSED ECONOMIC COMMISSION  
FOR LATIN AMERICA

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTH MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Tuesday,  
25 November 1947, at 3.00 p.m.

Present:

Chairman: Mr. Carlos E. Stolk (Venezuela)  
Vice Chairman: Mr. H.M. Phillips (United Kingdom)  
Mr. H. Santa Cruz (Chile)  
Mr. P.C. Chang (China)  
Mr. J. de Folin (France)  
Mr. K. Azkoul (Lebanon)  
Mr. W. Fowler (United States of America)  
Mr. P. Zuloaga (Venezuela)

Representatives of Specialized Agencies:

Mr. R. Arellano-Bonilla (FAO)

Non-Governmental Organizations having Consultative Status:

Mr. S. Romualdi (AFL)

Secretariat:

Mr. H.E. Caustin (Deputy Director, Division of  
Economic Stability and  
Development)  
Mr. E. Castillo (Joint Secretaries)  
Mr. H. Daniel

The CHAIRMAN opened the meeting, regretting that through illness he had been unable to attend the previous meeting. He then read a letter from the Director-General of the Pan American Union explaining the reason why he had not been able to accept the ad hoc Committee's recent invitation to

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attend its meetings and noting that this had been misinterpreted in the press. The letter went on to assure the Chairman of the importance which the Pan American Union and its organs attached to collaboration with the United Nations; (The full text of the letter is appended as Annex I).

The CHAIRMAN then read his interim reply to the letter of the Director-General of the Pan American Union which emphasized the wish of the ad hoc Committee for the fullest collaboration. (The full text of the letter is appended as Annex II). With the Committee's permission he now proposed to write a formal reply to Director-General Camargo in the name of the Committee.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) agreed with this proposal and requested the Chairman to enclose in his letter a copy of the statement he had made at the Committee's last meeting clarifying earlier remarks about which there had been serious misunderstandings in the press (document E/AC.21/11). He also wished to have enclosed a copy of the Summary Record of that meeting. It would then be clear that misunderstandings existed only in the press and not between the Committee and the Pan American Union.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should now discuss the Working Paper which the four Latin American delegates had revised (document E/AC.21/W.2/Rev.1). As however there were no comments on this paper, he thought that they should then pass on to consider the Secretariat paper "Review of Economic Conditions throughout Latin America" (document E/AC.21/W.4).

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) stated that the last meeting had been adjourned in order to afford the delegates time to consider the two documents referred to by the Chairman. If the non-Latin American members had no further observations to make on the economic factors recorded in these documents, he believed that the time had come for the Committee to determine how and when it would arrive at a decision on the basic point of establishing an Economic Commission for Latin America.

Mr. de FOLIN (France) said that his delegation had carefully considered the documents before the Committee relating to the economic problems of Latin America. He now felt that consideration should be given to the important matter of the proposed Commission's terms of reference. The question arose whether these terms of reference should be drawn up by the Committee or whether they should be drawn up by the Economic and Social Council, following recommendations in the Committee's report. His delegation believed that this was a task for the Committee as draft terms of reference would be of definite assistance to both the Bogota Conference and the Economic and Social Council.

/Mr. PHILLIPS

Mr. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom) believed that the representative of Chile had spoken to the point when he said that the Committee must now decide whether or not it favoured the creation of the proposed Commission. However, although some representatives were already committed, he thought that the factors involved must be fully considered.

The representative of the United Kingdom went on to say that the Secretariat was drafting a paper covering formal factors. It could proceed to draft a paper on the economic factors as soon as the Committee completed its discussion of the documents before it, particularly the "Review of Economic Conditions throughout Latin America" (document E/AC.21/W.4), which he had found useful and interesting. The members of the Committee could then rapidly make up their minds regarding the establishment of the proposed Commission. After considering the proposed Commission's relationship to the work of the Specialized Agencies and to other agencies working in the Latin American field, the Committee would then be in a position to work on the proposed Commission's terms of reference.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) believed that the preparation by the Secretariat of papers on the formal and economic factors would advance the Committee's work. He then noted that the gravity of the factors set out in the paper drafted by the four Latin American delegates (document E/AC.21/W.2/Rev.1) had not been questioned. He recalled that in the discussions before the General Assembly's Second Committee, where many non-Latin American countries had supported the proposal to create an Economic Commission for Latin America, there had been a tendency to accept the idea that economic development might well be dealt with by such a commission. He recalled, too, that the preamble to the Assembly resolution on the proposed Economic Commission for the Middle East referred to the favourable reception given to the proposal for an Economic Commission for Latin America by the Second Committee of the General Assembly.

It was, he thought, in the light of these considerations that the Committee should now decide whether or not the proposed commission should be created. They could then, as the representative of France suggested, proceed to work on the terms of reference.

Mr. FOWLER (United States of America) stated his general agreement with the procedure outlined by the representative of the United Kingdom and noted that the Committee would need fuller information on existing machinery for handling Latin America's economic problems before it would be possible to deal with the terms of reference. It would be helpful if the Secretariat were to prepare a paper bringing together the data on this  
/machinery

machinery. He went on to state that in preparing the paper on economic problems the Secretariat should focus attention on the urgent problems which had been aggravated by the war. Referring to the Working Paper prepared by the four Latin American delegates (document E/AC.21/W.2/Rev.1), he wished it clearly understood that it had been revised by these delegates in the light of the discussion in the Committee, and not by the Committee itself.

The CHAIRMAN stated that the Secretariat would go ahead and prepare the paper suggested on the formal and economic factors and he would continue his efforts to obtain the information desired from the Pan American Union.

Mr. CAUSTIN (for the Assistant Secretary-General) stated that it had been hoped that the Committee would discuss the "Review of Economic Conditions throughout Latin America" (document E/AC.21/W.4) in order that the Secretariat could have some guidance as to those matters which the Committee regarded as important.

Mr. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom) thought that the Committee should now discuss document E/AC.21/W.4 so that the Secretariat could proceed with its task.

Mr. de FOLIN (France) considered that the data given in this document were valuable and that no further amplification of the economic material was necessary.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) then noted that five members of the ad hoc Committee were also members of the Pan American Union. If any duplication existed between the work of its organs and the work of the proposed commission these members would be aware of it. He believed that there was no such duplication and suggested that if the other representatives were aware of duplication, they should inform the Committee.

Mr. AZKOU (Lebanon) agreed with the representative of Chile that it would be easy to ascertain if any duplication existed and added that the preparation of the terms of reference would also reveal this.

Mr. FOWLER (United States of America) thought, however, that the Committee should continue to seek further data to ensure that there was no duplication.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) pointed out that the Latin American countries were most anxious to avoid duplication, and it followed from their support of the proposal to establish a commission that none existed.

Mr. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom) agreed that the Committee should do nothing which might lead to duplication. He believed, however, that sufficient safeguards existed to ensure that no significant duplication need occur. Thus there was the fact that the twenty Latin American republics had asked for the creation of special machinery to help solve their economic  
/problems,

problems, from which it might be inferred that none already existed. In addition, the Committee was receiving the minutes of the meetings of the Special Commission which the Inter-American Economic and Social Council had set up to examine the proposal to create a United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America. This, too, would point up any duplication. Finally, the Committee was bound to ascertain the views of the Bogotá Conference, and if duplication existed it could also be indicated at that time. If, then, at a later date, duplication was found to exist, the Committee could attend to it when drafting the relevant sections of the terms of reference. He went on to express the hope that the members of the Committee would state their views on the "Review of Economic Conditions throughout Latin America" (document E/AC.21/W.4) so that the Secretariat could proceed with its drafting. His own view was that the paper was most useful.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) also agreed that the paper was useful. He went on to suggest that future meetings be held daily as this would be particularly convenient for the Cuban and Peruvian representatives who would have to come from Washington.

The CHAIRMAN agreed that if the Committee so desired meetings could henceforth be held daily. He then asked for observations on document E/AC.21/W.4 so that the Secretariat might proceed with its drafting.

Mr. de FOLIN (France) repeated his statement that this paper contained very useful information and believed that further economic data was unnecessary.

Mr. FOWLER (United States of America) referred to the statement on the cover page of document E/AC.21/W.4 that certain current economic problems had not been dealt with for lack of data. He wondered if these data had now come to hand as he felt that the pointing up of the most urgent economic problems was needed.

In closing the meeting, the CHAIRMAN stated that the Secretariat would no doubt emphasize urgent problems in the paper which would now be drafted.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.

ANNEX 2

PAN-AMERICAN UNION

Washington 6, D.C., U.S.A.

19 November 1947

Mr. Carlos Eduardo Stolk,

Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Proposed Economic Commission for  
Latin America,  
United Nations,  
New York.

Sir,

I have seen reports in the Latin-American press from international news-agency correspondents, concerning the work of the ad hoc Committee over which you preside and the attitude attributed to the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, together with capricious and inaccurate interpretations of my reply to the very kind invitation which you extended to me on behalf of the Committee in your letter of 23 October last and repeated in your telegram of 4 November.

I thought that, probably because my telegram to you was drafted in Spanish, there had been some error of transmission which altered the sense - a frequent occurrence in this country's telegraphy. But as my reply appears to have occasioned statements which the same newspapers attribute to certain Latin-American delegates, I should like there to be no doubt, Mr. Chairman, as to the Inter-American Economic and Social Council's desire to co-operate with the organs of the United Nations and the ad hoc Committee, and as to opinion held by the Pan-American Union in general regarding relations with the United Nations.

I did not immediately answer your letter inviting me to attend a meeting of the ad hoc Committee over which you preside for the sole reason that the Director-General of the Pan-American Union is not the natural representative of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council. Even before your letter reached me, a special commission set up by the Inter-American Council to consider what the Bogota Conference should recommend as to the desirability of establishing a United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America knew that your invitation would be sent to me, and asked for my opinion on the subject. I told them that I had not yet received your communication, but that in any case I would communicate it to the Inter-American Economic and Social Council and would take no decision without knowing its opinion.

/When your letter

When your letter reached me, I had it sent to the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, and it was thoroughly discussed in its meeting of 3 November. The Inter-American Economic and Social Council decided to seek informal contact between its own delegates and the American delegates on the United Nations Economic and Social Council, to exchange views and information on the setting up of a special Economic Commission for Latin America and also to ask Mr. Paul Daniels, United States representative on the Inter-American Council and Chairman of the Special Commission on the subject, to communicate with you. The Inter-American Council did not feel sufficiently well-informed or ready to give instructions to any other person - in this case the Director-General of the Pan-American Union - to maintain contact with the ad hoc Committee over which you preside. It was only on my return from Detroit, on the same date as my telegram to you, that I learnt the Council's opinion and communicated it to you. I do not know in what form my telegram was transmitted; the text was:

"Carlos Eduardo Stolk, Venezuelan Delegation to the United Nations, Lake Success, New York. Your letter of 23 October and your telegram of the 4th. Have brought your communications before the Economic and Social Council. I understand the Council is not yet ready to discuss the setting up of an Economic Commission for Latin America with the ad hoc Committee. But it has informally commissioned Ambassador Daniels to have talks with you and contact the ad hoc Committee. I consider this solution much more suitable than intervention on my part, and therefore, while thanking you sincerely for your kind invitation, I think I should not accept it, though I shall be most happy at any time to discuss this or any other question with you. I shall be in New York at the end of the week and shall try to see you. Cordial greetings.

(signed) Alberto Lleras, Director-General of the Pan-American Union."

It was a real surprise to me that the press correspondents should have understood and reported to our countries that there had been reluctance to collaborate with the Committee or with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, or even with the United Nations itself, for the sole reason that I had not been authorized by the Inter-American Council to accept an invitation which, for my part, I could not accept as a representative of the Council without being expressly appointed by it. The Inter-American Council's wish, moreover, was not to avoid establishing contact with the Committee over which you preside but, on the contrary, to arrange previous informal meetings to enable the Council to acquaint itself with all the antecedents of the problem under consideration. You and all the members of the Committee are well aware how the representative bodies of Governments must necessarily be reserved in any action which might commit their

/Governments,

Governments, without full knowledge of the subject and previous consultation with their superiors. In this particular case, account was also taken of the advisability of representatives of some of the American Governments to the United Nations and the Pan-American Union reaching a close agreement in order that no discrepancy of opinion should appear in the different bodies of each organisation. I find this attitude very wise and commendable, and hope that you, Mr. Chairman, knowing the facts, will fully approve it.

I omitted to mention in my telegram that the Inter-American Economic and Social Council would seek a second method of contact between the members of the ad hoc Committee over which you preside and those of the Special Commission of the Inter-American Council because the Council wished such contact to be established informally and not officially. I should now like to point out to you that the Council members attach great importance to this second means of contact and continue to regard it as very useful to avoid misunderstandings and publications such as those which may already have created in our countries a false impression of conflict between the two organisations.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that I have completely cleared up this incident with you, and I venture to ask you likewise to explain it to the other members of the ad hoc Committee. I hear that Mr. Daniels communicated with you subsequently, and hope that he contributed to dispelling any misunderstanding.

I have the honour to be, etc.

Alberto Lleras  
Director-General



ANNEX 2

UNITED STATES OF VENEZUELA  
Delegation to the United Nations

New York, 21 November 1947.

Sir,

I have just received your letter of 19 November, in which you refer in detail to the facts concerning the invitation I had the honour to extend to you on 23 October last, and although I am confined to my home owing to illness, I do not wish to delay my personal reply until I have the opportunity of transmitting its contents to my colleagues on the ad hoc Committee.

Knowing as I do the structure of our inter-American system and the noble aims which it pursues, as well as your own wide international vision and initiative, I have always been firmly convinced of the high spirit of co-operation which animates the Pan-American Union in general and you yourself as its Director, in regard to United Nations activities. I testified to this when reporting your telegram to one of the meetings of the ad hoc Committee. On that occasion I said that this message should be interpreted as an expression of the desire to find the best means of establishing collaboration between the two organisations in the case in point, and that I should immediately try to come to a satisfactory arrangement in order to save time. You may therefore rest assured that I have never entertained the slightest doubt as to the goodwill to which I have referred, and that I sincerely deplore the interpretations published in regard to your telegram, the English text of which I have not to hand, but which I believe corresponds more or less with the text you reproduce in your letter.

I shall be glad to communicate the contents of your letter to the members of the ad hoc Committee as you request, and I hope that, on the basis of the talks I have had with Mr. Daniels, we shall soon be able to arrange the co-ordination of our work to our mutual advantage and for the better promotion of our common aims.

I have the honour to be, etc.

Carlos Eduardo Stolk.

Dr. Alberto Lleras Camargo,  
Director-General of the Pan-American Union,  
Washington, D.C.

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