

**ECONOMIC
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SOCIAL COUNCIL****CONSEIL
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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Third session, Lake Success, N. Y., 21 March 1949

Item 12 (h) on the provisional agenda

ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES

1. At its second session, held in Geneva in 1948, the Commission devoted considerable time and attention to the resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 10 March 1948 - resolution 128 (VI) D (annexed to this document) - requesting the Commissions of the Council to establish priorities in their respective programmes.
2. However, at that time the Commission found it impossible to establish priorities in its work. The Commission felt that the reason for this lay in the character of its work. Covering the entire field of transport and communications, the Commission's functions are of a varied nature, e.g., advisory, stimulative, co-ordinating and organizing. The Commission felt that no priority could be given to the work to be done in connection with one function over the work in connection with another function, while some of its work had not lent itself to priorities being attached to it (e.g., its advisory functions). Moreover, the Commission considered that it could not give priorities to one region over another, nor to one means of transport and communications over another. Lastly, it felt that some important problems were of a less urgent nature than some problems of lesser importance.
3. For these reasons the Commission, referring in this connection to the request by the Economic and Social Council to the Secretary-General contained in the above-mentioned resolution of the Council to submit to the seventh session of the Council suggestions regarding the form and character of the Commissions and other subsidiary organs of the Council, stated in the report on its second session (document E/789) that it would welcome further directives in this respect, so that it would be able to act upon them at its next session.
4. The members of the Commission will find set forth below information concerning the subsequent developments in the examination of this matter:
 - (a) In his report on the form and character of Commission reports (document E/845) submitted to the seventh session of the Economic and Social

and Social Council, in pursuance of resolution 128 (VI) D of the Council, the Secretary-General stated the following, in connection with the establishment of priorities in the work of Commissions of the United Nations:

"The Secretary-General recognizes the difficulties that will arise in the carrying out of this resolution, but he wishes to stress that its effective application will greatly help him in the discharge of his budgetary responsibilities, and in this as in other respects he will do anything in his power to facilitate the work of Commissions.

"Where, as may be the case in the whole or part of certain fields or types of work, the subject matter does not require or does not permit of the selection of priorities, a statement of the position should be made in the report".

(b) The Secretary-General's report on the form and character of Commission reports was considered at the seventh session of the Economic and Social Council by a Committee on Matters relating to Co-ordination at its tenth and twenty-sixth meetings (documents E/AC.24/SR.10 and E/AC.24/SR.26). As a result of this consideration, in its report to that session of the Economic and Social Council (document E/1038) the Committee approved, with certain modifications, the standard form for Commission reports suggested by the Secretary-General for normal use - the form for priorities being that quoted in paragraph (a) above - from which deviations might, however, be made in exceptional cases; and inter alia, recommended that "further work programmes should be precisely stated, together with an indication of priorities".

(c) The Committee recommended among the draft resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, a resolution relating, inter alia, to programme co-ordination (document E/1038, page 8) in which the Council requests the specialized agencies, the Commissions and other subsidiary organs of the Council, and the Secretary-General to continue their work in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 125 (II)* and 165 (II)**, and Council resolution 128 (VI) D, in the light of the examination of that matter made by the Council.

* Resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its second session on Relations with and co-ordination of specialized agencies and Work Programmes of the United Nations and specialized agencies.

** Resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its second session on Budgetary and financial relations with specialized agencies.

(d) After considering this report at its 225th meeting, the Economic and Social Council adopted this resolution without change on .

28 August 1949 (document E/SR.225).

5. Thus it follows from the foregoing that - although the Council did not take any specific decision on the part of the report of the Transport and Communications Commission on its second session concerning the establishment of priorities of work in its programme - the further directives in this respect which the Commission desired to receive from the Economic and Social Council have indeed been included in the Council's resolution cited in paragraph 4, sub-paragraphs (c) and (d) above.

ANNEX

RESOLUTIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF 10 MARCH 1948
ON RELATIONS WITH AND CO-ORDINATION OF SPECIALIZED
AGENCIES

Resolution 128 (VI) D

"The Economic and Social Council

Requests the Commissions of the Council to establish priorities of work, in their respective programmes, based on the urgency and importance of the projects in fulfilling the purposes of Article 55 of the Charter of the United Nations, and to indicate these priorities in their reports to the Economic and Social Council;

Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the seventh session of the Council suggestions regarding the form and character of the reports of commissions and other subsidiary organs of the Council."
