

United Nations
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL

Nations Unies
CONSEIL
ECONOMIQUE
ET SOCIAL

UNRESTRICTED
E/CN.3/SR.22
4 September 1947
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

SECOND SESSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Lake Success, New York, on Thursday, 4 September 1947, at 2.35 p.m.

Present:

Chairman: Mr. H. Marshall	(Canada)
Mr. D. K. Lieu	(China)
Mr. G. Darmois	(France)
Mr. P. C. Mahalanobis	(India)
Mr. Ph. J. Idenburg	(Netherlands)
Mr. G. Jahn	(Norway)
Mr. S. Inan	(Turkey)
Mr. I. S. Malyshev	(Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
Mr. V. A. Rabichko	(Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)
Mr. R. G. D. Allen	(United Kingdom)
Mr. S. A. Rice	(United States)
Mr. A. Ochoa Mayo	(Mexico) Alternate for Mr. Josue Saenz

Representatives of Specialized Agencies:

Mr. R. M. Woodbury	(ILO)
Mr. A. Eckstein	(FAO)
Mr. A. M. Lester	(ICAO)
Mr. J. J. Polak	(FUND)

Non-Governmental Organizations having Consultative Status:

Mr. G. L. Ridgeway	(ICC)
Mr. L. Teper	(AFL)

Observers for Specialized Agencies:

Mr. K. Stowman	(WHO)
----------------	-------

/Secretariat:

NOV 5 1947

Secretariat: Mr. W. R. Leonard (Representing the Assistant Secretary-
General in Charge of Economic Affairs)
Mr. W. J. Bruce (Secretary to the Commission)

DRAFT REPORT OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
(E/CN.3/36)

The RAPPORTEUR read the amended text of paragraph 7 which was adopted:

7. The Commission concentrated its attention upon two of the essential characteristics of an effective international statistical system for the United Nations. It is generally agreed that the system must have, first, a strong central unit continuously responsible for meeting the statistical needs of the various organs of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies related to it. Second, the system must gradually develop such a standardization of statistical definitions and classification as will result in comparability among the statistics of national governments and inter-governmental agencies.

Paragraph 16 was amended to read:

16. In order to review systematically the statistical work of the League of Nations and its Committee of Statistical Experts with a view to utilizing in the further activities of the Commission the experience of these earlier bodies and the experience of national governments in respect to their statistical activities and recommendations, a Committee on Future Work of the Commission, was created to report at the Commission's third session.

16a Steps were also taken looking toward the formal assumption by the United Nations of the functions given to the Committee of Statistical Experts by the International Convention Relating to Economic Statistics (1928).

After discussion it was agreed that a new paragraph should be inserted after paragraph 25 along the lines of Mr. IDENBURG's proposal at the morning meeting, as follows:

25a The attention of the Statistical Commission has been drawn to the work undertaken within the framework of economic co-operation between the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg for the integration of their statistics. The Commission believes that such a project may lead to valuable suggestions and stimulants for its own work. It therefore requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report for consideration of the Commission at its third session dealing with the steps taken to integrate their statistics by Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg, and with any other steps of similar character which may be

/in process

in process or proposed affecting other geographical areas.

With regard to the change made in paragraph 19, Mr. WOODBURY (ILO) requested that the report of the Commission include the reservation that the transfer protocol shall not be construed as modifying or impairing the rights and obligations of the International Labour Organization or other specialized agencies under the International Convention relating to Economic Statistics. It was the decision of the Commission that this reservation could not be included in the report of the Commission, but would be noted in the Summary Record.

Paragraph 27 was accepted without change and the succeeding unnumbered paragraph was accepted.

Mr. MALYSHEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought that paragraph 28 should be expanded. The following amendment as a second part of that paragraph was agreed:

The Commission also

REQUESTS the Secretary-General to arrange with the Food and Agriculture Organization to present at the next session of the Commission, a report which would indicate the progress made in developing the plans for the 1950 World Census of Agriculture, and the steps taken for the standardization of definitions and concepts, as well as draft schedules and forms, tabulation and publication plans, which might be recommended to permit the totalling of items of the census.

Mr. ECKSTEIN (FAO) said that the Food and Agriculture Organization would be pleased to submit such a report to the Commission, but pointed out that the Statistical Commission in any event had no jurisdiction of the plans of his Organization for the census since their programme was written in their charter which had been laid down by their Governing Bodies.

Chapter V, paragraph 31, the third sentence of this paragraph was amended to read:

It requested that such comments be transmitted so as to be received by the Secretary-General not later than 1 February 1948.....

It was agreed that the Committee on Statistical Classification would meet at a date a few days prior to the third session of the Statistical Commission.

Paragraph 32. The composition of the Committee was amended to include the name of Mr. G. DARMOIS (France). In connection with the latter part of the paragraph Mr. WOODBURY (ILO) read a resolution of the Sixth International Conference of Labour Statisticians on the subject of the classification of occupations, and the CHAIRMAN indicated that the Committee would take the resolution into consideration in its work.

/An amendment

An amendment was suggested by Mr. MALYSHEV to paragraph 34 and the following language was adopted:

The Statistical Commission, stressing the necessity of implementing the resolution of the Economic and Social Council that "the submission of statistical data and their publication will be undertaken with the consent of the governments concerned" (E/76/Rev.1, 2 June 1946),

RECOMMENDS that every effort be made to broaden the geographical scope of the regions covered by the various publications of the Statistical Office dealing with branches of economic and social statistics.

NOTES that various countries and localities have no statistical organizations which function continuously and that consequently the collection and analysis of statistical data dealing with important branches of economic and social life is not being undertaken.

In those cases where reliable and positive data are not available but where such data may be deduced by means of generally accepted and scientifically sound statistical methods, the Commission

RECOMMENDS that the Secretary-General should compile or compute such estimated data and submit them to the governments concerned for comment, also,

RECOMMENDS that the Secretary-General take all necessary measures in order to receive replies from the governments concerned within a reasonable interval, which would in no case be longer than ninety days from the time of the submission of such data. If the government concerned agrees, the Secretary-General may proceed with the publication of such estimated data as it deems necessary for the appropriate performance of its authorized functions, provided that, in all instances in which estimated or unofficial statistical data are published the character and the sources of the figures as well as the method of computation employed, shall be appropriately identified.

It was agreed that the Statistical Office would report on how this practice operates.

Mr. IDENBURG (Netherlands) referred to the printing of the reports of the League of Nations Committee of Statistical Experts and suggested that a paragraph be inserted in the report regarding the status of this matter. It was agreed to insert the following paragraph to follow paragraph 34:

The Commission received a report that the manuscripts prepared under the direction of the League of Nations Committee of Statistical Experts were being edited for printing and stresses the importance which it attaches to the early publication of these manuscripts.

Paragraph 35 was amended and adopted to read:

35. The Statistical Commission received a progress report on the programme of work on statistics of national income and expenditure (E/CN.3/25). It notes with approval the plans developed in this report for a publication on national income statistics by the Secretariat. It requests the Secretariat to include in its current programme estimates of real national income. It also suggests that the Statistical Office collect data on the distributive shares of national income accruing to major population groups, and that data should be collected on the distribution of incomes of individuals by size and by other important categories. Attention was drawn to the need of the Food and Agriculture Organization for data on income received by persons engaged in agriculture and on the contribution of agriculture to national income.

Paragraph 38 was amended and adopted as follows:

38. The Statistical Commission considered a memorandum prepared by the Secretariat dealing with transport statistics (E/CN.3/29). The Commission recommends that the Secretariat continue the collection and analysis of existing statistics on transport in various countries with a view to appraising their comparability. Due account should be taken of the statistical needs and views of the Transport and Communications Commission and the work of other international organizations in this field. Where necessary, collaboration should be established with them.

Paragraph 40 was adopted with the following change in the first sentence and with the addition of Mr. MAHAIANOBIS (India) to the membership of the Committee.

40. In considering its future work the Statistical Commission deemed it advisable to review systematically, except where otherwise provided for, the statistical work accomplished and the recommendations made by the Committee of Statistical Experts, other organs of the League of Nations and other international organizations....

Paragraph 41, first sentence was amended to read:

41. As materials for the committee's work, the Secretariat is requested to prepare a memorandum summarizing the major accomplishments.....

A new paragraph 42 was added to the report, to read:

42. The Commission has taken note of the request of the Population Commission that consideration be given to the development of standards in the field of housing statistics so that they may be applied in

/connection

connection with the censuses to be taken in or around 1950 (E/571). The Statistical Commission therefore requests its Committee on Future Work to take this into account in the development of its programme.

Mr. Teper (AFL) proposed the following text which was adopted as part of the report:

In order to encourage national governments to publish more reliable statistical information about method, sources, components and formulae used in the development of their different economic time series, the Statistical Commission requests the Secretary-General to prepare a memorandum listing the various items of information which it deems of importance to the users of national data in order to promote proper utilization and comparability of such statistics on an international scale.

The Secretary was instructed to edit the draft of the report for submission to the Council.

The Meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.
