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E/2948  
E/CN.2/187



UNITED NATIONS

**TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMISSION  
REPORT OF THE EIGHTH SESSION**

(7-16 JANUARY 1957)

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
OFFICIAL RECORDS : TWENTY-THIRD SESSION**

**SUPPLEMENT No. 3**

**NEW YORK**

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## NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
OFFICIAL RECORDS

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 3

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council on its eighth session held  
in New York from 7 to 16 January 1957

I. Introduction

1. The eighth session of the Transport and Communications Commission opened at United Nations Headquarters in New York on Monday, 7 January 1957. The following members of the Commission attended:

Bulgaria: Mr. Nacho Petkov Simeonov, Mr. Bogomil Todorov (alternate representative).  
Burma: Mr. Shwe Shane.  
Chile: Mr. Octavio Echegoyen.\*  
China: Mr. C. Y. Hsiao.  
Ecuador: Dr. Alberto Barriga.\*  
France: Mr. Henri Barbier,\* Mr. L. Audigou.\*  
India: Mr. S. K. Ghosh.\*  
Lebanon: Dr. Assad Kotaite.  
Netherlands: Mr. Willem L. de Vries.  
Norway: Mr. Erling Foien, Mr. Oyvind Scott-Hansen (alternate representative and adviser).  
Poland: Mr. Kazimierz Pierzynski.\*  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. M. P. Voronichev, Mr. Alexander Savelev and Mr. V. G. Molchanov (alternate representatives).  
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: Mr. R. W. Bullmore.\*  
United States of America: Mr. John C. Baker, Mr. Donald V. Lowe, (alternate representative and senior adviser), Mr. Robert T. Merrill and Mr. H. H. Kelly (alternate representatives and advisers).  
Venezuela: Dr. Ignacio Silva Sucre\* (alternate representative and adviser).

The members of the Commission were accompanied by the following advisers:

Mr. Vesselin Izmirliiev (Bulgaria).  
Mr. C. J. M. Schaepman, Mr. J. J. Schuld (Netherlands).  
Mr. A. A. Jomkov (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics).  
Mr. H. F. Hancock (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).  
Mr. Seymour Finger, Mr. James W. Mahoney, Mr. Jerome Sachs (United States of America).  
Mr. José A. Manzano (Venezuela).

Sweden sent an observer, Mr. B. Rabaeus.

\*Alternate, in accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure, the member confirmed by the Economic and Social Council being unable to attend.

2. The following representatives of specialized agencies were present at the session:

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Mr. René Maheu, Mr. William Frye.  
International Civil Aviation Organization: Mr. R. J. Moulton, Mr. P. M. Norman.  
International Labour Organisation: Mr. R. A. Métall, Mr. R. Payro, Mr. R. Roux, Mr. O. S. Seiersen.  
International Monetary Fund: Mr. Roland Kalivoda.  
World Health Organization: Dr. R. Coigney, Dr. V. Tabona, Mr. G. Pierce.  
World Meteorological Organization: Mr. Louis Harmantas.

3. The following representatives from non-governmental organizations were also present at the session:

CATEGORY A

International Chamber of Commerce: Mr. John T. Byrne, Mr. Carl E. McDowell, Mrs. Roberta Lusardi, Mr. Joseph A. Cerina.

World Federation of Trade Unions: Miss Elinor Kahn.

CATEGORY B

Chamber of Commerce of the United States: Mr. Earl Cruickshank.

International Air Transport Association: Mr. J. A. Paine, Mr. John E. Gillham.

International Road Federation: Mr. Arthur Nagle.

International Union of Official Travel Organizations: Mr. H. H. Kelly (observer).

International Touring Alliance; International Automobile Federation; Inter-American Federation of Automobile Clubs: Mr. E. Rohner, Mr. W. Y. Sheridan.

REGISTER

International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association: Mr. George Chernowitz, Mr. R. P. Holubowitz, Mr. Peter Engelman.

4. The Commission elected Mr. Willem L. de Vries (Netherlands) as its Chairman and Mr. S. K. Ghosh (India) as its Vice-Chairman.

5. The secretariat consisted of: Mr. B. Lukač (Representative of the Secretary-General), Director, Transport and Communications Division; Mr. M. H. Higgins (Secretary of the Commission), Deputy

Director of the Transport and Communications Division; and Mr. Louis Delanney, Chief, Aviation, Shipping and Communications Section.

6. The provisional agenda (E/CN.2/166) was adopted by the Commission.

7. After considering the items on its agenda, the Commission adopted unanimously the present report and all resolutions.

8. The Commission concluded its session on 16 January 1957.

## II. Communications by the Secretariat (Agenda Item 3)

9. The Commission was informed by the Secretariat of developments which had occurred since the seventh session on a number of matters previously considered by the Commission.

### (a) REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF INLAND TRANSPORT

10. The Commission noted the report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/175 and Corr. 1) providing a comprehensive survey of inland transport developments in Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Far East and Europe. In addition, the Secretary-General's report included a brief description of the more important developments of inland transportation in the Middle East provided in compliance with the Commission's decision at its seventh session (E/2696<sup>1</sup>/ para. 18).

11. The Commission took note of the continued steady progress achieved in the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) and the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) in the inland transport field. In ECE work had continued on the full range of inland transport problems: progress towards a new type of international railway tariffs was noted, and also the acceptance by nine countries of the Protocol on the standardization of wooden packaging for fruit and vegetables, and the signing by nine countries of the Convention on the contract for the international carriage of goods by road. In addition, measures to reduce road traffic accidents affecting existing protocols and agreements in the field were the subject of agreement and further study.

12. In ECAFE, the Commission noted that the Training Centre for Railway Operating and Signalling Officials has continued to receive wide support from the Governments inside and outside the region. The Technical Sub-Committees of ECAFE have continued their activities which include the problems of dieselization and improved turn-around of freight cars. The important subject of railway accidents and measures for their prevention is being studied in conjunction with the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

13. The importance of roads as a means of facilitating travel and economic contacts had been the subject of a number of ECAFE studies.

14. The Commission noted that the drafting of the Convention regarding the Measurement and Registration of Vessels Employed in Inland Navigation has now been completed, and that a Training Centre for Diesel Marine Mechanics jointly sponsored by ECAFE and ILO has been set up.

15. Transport problems have been increasingly the subject of study in ECLA in connexion with economic development and of general studies undertaken in the field of inter-American trade. Country studies by ECLA on Brazil (E/CN.12/364/Add. 1) and Colombia (E/CN.12/365) deal with transport aspects of economic development, while in Central America progress continues in the development of international road transport. In particular, reports on the Regulation of International Road Transport and on Maritime Transport in Central America have been considered by the Central American Economic Co-operation Committee, which has been able to make a number of recommendations to its member Governments with the object of promoting the growth of international road transport in the area.

16. Outside the regions directly served by an Economic Commission, the Commission noted the progress made in Africa in connexion with the development of new international railway routes between Central and South Africa. In the Middle East some progress has been made towards the reconstruction of the Hejaz Railway as a result of a joint commission appointed by the Governments of Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Railway lines between Turkey and Iran and Turkey and Iraq are also being improved. Further seminars of the Highway Development Training Centre in Ankara have been organized by the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration and the 1956 Seminar was followed by a meeting of the Director of Highways of certain Middle East countries to discuss problems of common interest. The Commission noted with satisfaction the increasing interest in the regional aspects of road transport in the Middle East.

17. In those regions served directly by an Economic Commission, the Commission is able to report continuous and steady progress.

18. Outside the scope of United Nations activities, note was further taken of the progress made in strengthening co-operation between the Organization of American States, the Pan American Railway Congress Association and the Pan American Highway Congress.

19. In Europe, outside the immediate field of activity of ECE, the Commission noted the continuing activity of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport, the establishment of a number of through tariffs on the transport of combustibles and minerals, negotiated under the auspices of the European Coal and Steel Community and the holding of a diplomatic conference at Berne from 16 to 18 June 1955 to decide the entry into force of the Revised Berne Conventions on the transport of goods by rail and on the transport of passengers and luggage by rail (CIM and CIV) signed at Berne on 25 October 1952.

### (b) CO-ORDINATION OF INLAND TRANSPORT

20. The Commission reviewed the long-term aspects of the co-ordination of inland transport which have

<sup>1</sup>/Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Nineteenth Session, Supplement No. 4.

been studied by the regional Commissions in addition to the work of the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Labour Organisation in this field. It was noted that ECAFE regarded the inclusion of coastal shipping in any survey undertaken as of great importance, and that the Inland Transport Committee has agreed upon the lines of future study of their problems planned by a working group of experts set up by ECAFE.

21. The Inland Transport Committee of ECE had examined various studies on coordination of inland transport prepared by the Secretariat in conjunction with experts. It was noted that the Committee decided not to continue the study of matters of principle concerning co-ordination of transport. It would deal with co-ordination of transport only in conjunction with certain specific questions such as, for example, that of the apportionment of track costs. It was further noted that a comprehensive study by the Committee of the problem of cost continued. The International Chamber of Commerce emphasized the importance in this field of all studies relating to the freedom of choice and to the cost borne by the user.

22. The representative of the Netherlands referred to the proposed study of ECAFE on general principles for the calculation of comparative costs which should be taken into consideration in studies dealing with the problem of co-ordination for all means of transport. Considerable studies had been made of those subjects in ECE and, although the results obtained were not entirely applicable to other regions, the detailed scientific information contained therein would be useful to ECAFE. The Commission was informed that there was close co-operation among the regional economic commissions in the matter and full exchange existed of the results of their consideration of the problem of co-ordination of transport in accordance with Council resolution 298 H (XI) adopted at the recommendation of the Transport and Communications Commission at its fourth session.

23. The Commission also took note of developments in this field at meetings of the International Railway Congress Association, in particular in connexion with railway tariffs. Some bearing on the problem is also to be noted in the study on the problems of the financial situation of the railways concerning the seventeen railway administrations of the Union undertaken at the request of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport.

#### (c) UNIFORM SYSTEM OF ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS

24. As a result of the discussions at its seventh session, the Commission proposed and the Council adopted, in May 1955, resolution 567 B (XIX). In this resolution, the Council recommended to governments that they consider the provisions of the draft Protocol on a Uniform System of Road Signs and Signals as recommended practices when revising their systems of road signs and signals either unilaterally or bilaterally, or in regional agreements, in order to further the progressive achievement of uniformity in this field. The Secretary-General was invited to report to the ninth session of the Commission on the progress in the implementation by Governments of this recommendation.

25. The Commission noted the response to the inquiry by the Secretary-General, as described in the progress report (E/CN.2/174). The replies so far received indicate considerable interest in the question. The Commission also noted the information provided with respect to regional developments in this field. While there still may be considerable obstacles in the way of achieving world-wide uniformity, the Commission noted with satisfaction that there appeared to be widespread acceptance of the desirability of eventual unification.

26. It was stated that acceptance by Governments of the system embodied in the draft Protocol would be encouraged if the preparation would now be undertaken of a guide to the implementation of the draft Protocol. Such action had been envisaged by the Group of Experts who prepared the technical provisions of the draft Protocol. The Commission was of the opinion that decision on the possible preparation of a guide might be left until the ninth session of the Commission.

#### (d) UNIFICATION OF MARITIME TONNAGE MEASUREMENT

27. The problem of the unification of maritime tonnage measurement, which it was agreed would be among the first to be considered by the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) when it has started to function, was again reviewed by the Commission. It was noted that Finland and France have ratified the 1947 Oslo Convention for a uniform system of tonnage measurement of ships, in addition to previous ratifications by Denmark, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. It was also noted that the Federal Republic of Germany has indicated that it may ratify the Convention in the near future.

28. After discussion it was generally agreed that further study of the possibility of international action to modernize the principles of measurement and thereby promote the establishment of international rules which might command a greater measure of acceptance was desirable, and that in the first instance a group of experts might be set up who could analyse and report on possible drawbacks in, and the important differences between, the main rules on tonnage measurement presently in force.

29. The Commission adopted unanimously the following resolution:

#### Resolution 1

#### UNIFICATION OF MARITIME TONNAGE MEASUREMENT

The Transport and Communications Commission,

Having considered the note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/167 and Add. 1) concerning the unification of maritime tonnage measurement,

Recalling the decisions adopted at its seventh session calling for periodic review of this problem by the Commission,

Recognizing the usefulness of the work already done in bringing about greater uniformity between the regulations relating to the tonnage measurement of ships,

1. Considers it necessary to continue this work;

2. Recommends the Economic and Social Council to request the Secretary-General:

(a) To establish a group of experts to prepare and present for consideration of the Transport and Communications Commission, at its ninth session, a report on the differences between the main rules governing tonnage measurement at present in force and their apparent shortcomings;

(b) To invite the Governments of those countries which indicate their interest in the unification of tonnage measurement to make available at his request and at their own expense experts to serve on the above group.

(e) POLLUTION OF SEA WATER

30. The Commission noted the action taken by the Secretariat in conformity with Economic and Social Council resolution 537 A (XVIII) to undertake the collection, analysis and dissemination of information about oil pollution in various countries. A questionnaire had been sent to Governments of States Members of the United Nations which have a sea coast, and to Governments of the non-member States represented at the International Conference on Pollution of the Sea by Oil (London 1954). An analysis of the information received embodied in a document entitled Pollution of the Sea by Oil (ST/ECA/41) had been sent to Governments, including detailed information of the existing situation in forty-two countries in this respect. The Commission noted that the Convention for the Prevention of the Pollution of the Sea by Oil, concluded at the London Conference, had been ratified to date by Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Mexico, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The Commission further learnt that Norway had just ratified the Convention.

31. The Transport and Communications Commission wished to record its appreciation of the document on the pollution of the sea by oil, which was considered to be a valuable contribution to the study of this problem. It was noted that encouraging progress had been made towards the ratification of the Convention and it was agreed that the matter should be kept under review by the Commission.

(f) SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO THE RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL MARITIME CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION (IMCO)

32. On the basis of the Secretary-General's report on this subject (E/CN.2/172), the Commission noted the following developments since its last session. At that time the Governments of seventeen countries had accepted the Convention, namely: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Burma, Canada, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Greece, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland, Israel, Mexico, Netherlands, United Kingdom and the United States of America. Since then, Switzerland deposited, in July 1955, its instrument of ratification. On the other hand, in March 1956, the Greek Government informed the Secretary-General that it was withdrawing its ratification of the Convention. Finally, in July 1956, Ecuador presented its instrument of ratification, but

as it included a "declaration", the Secretary-General submitted it to those countries which had ratified the Convention in order to ascertain their views, and also notified the Governments of those countries which are qualified to ratify the Convention but have not yet done so. In view of the fact that, according to article 60 of the Convention, a total number of twenty-one acceptances are needed to put the Convention into force, the Commission noted that the conditions required to bring IMCO into being have not yet been fulfilled.

33. The view was expressed by two members that certain provisions of the Convention placed some States in an entirely privileged position. One of them stated that his Government could not ratify the Convention while these discriminatory provisions remained in the text, and he suggested that a group of experts be established to draft suitable proposals for amendments to be submitted to the Commission in three or four months. The majority of the Commission did not share this view.

34. Another member stated that concern existed as to whether efforts to promote the creation of a national merchant marine might not be regarded as discrimination within the terms of the Convention.

35. In the light of detailed discussion, it was generally considered unnecessary further to explore the reasons why Governments eligible to ratify the Convention had not yet done so.

36. It was learned that the Italian Government had announced its intention to deposit its instrument of ratification in the near future. In view of this development and the probable acceptance by other States of the ratification by Ecuador in the form in which it has been deposited, the majority of members considered it preferable to await the coming into force of the Convention in its present form rather than to attempt to modify its terms and again begin the process of ratification. Moreover, the Convention itself provided possibilities for its amendment once it had entered into force.

(g) SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO RATIFICATION OF THE 1949 CONVENTION ON ROAD TRAFFIC

37. The Commission noted that, since its seventh session, six States had become parties to the Convention on Road Traffic (1949). The following twenty-five States are now parties to the Convention: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Cambodia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, Philippines, Portugal, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United States of America, Vatican City State, Viet-Nam and Yugoslavia. In addition, the Commission learned that a number of Governments were taking steps toward ratification of the Convention. On this matter the Commission also heard a statement by the representative of the International Chamber of Commerce.

38. The Commission took note of action taken by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 603 (XXI) of the Economic and Social Council which referred to the Commission's report on its seventh session and to resolution 185 of the Inland Transport Committee of ECE recommending to Governments parties to the 1949

Convention to examine the possibility of continuing to apply the provision of paragraph 6 of article 24 of that Convention for an additional period of three years up to 26 March 1960. To date, affirmative replies have been received from the Governments of these Contracting States: Belgium, Cambodia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Philippines, Sweden, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United States of America, Vatican City State, Viet-Nam and Yugoslavia.

39. In regard to the provision of authoritative translations of the international driving permit, the Commission noted that, to date, Arabic, Dutch, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Swedish and Tagalog authoritative translations have been received by the Secretariat.

40. In respect of distinguishing signs of vehicles in international traffic, it was noted that numerous additions have been made to the list of distinctive letters originally established at the 1949 Conference.

41. The Commission noted that the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 603 (XXI) recommended prompt ratification of the Convention by all Governments which have not already done so. The Commission considered it desirable to take further action to achieve the adoption of the Convention throughout the world for its value as a modern instrument providing the main standards for development and safety of international road traffic. Accordingly, the Commission adopted unanimously the following resolution:

### Resolution 2

#### RATIFICATION OF THE 1949 CONVENTION ON ROAD TRAFFIC

##### The Transport and Communications Commission,

Noting the resolution 603 (XXI) taken at the twenty-first session of the Economic and Social Council and recommending prompt ratification of the Convention on Road Traffic (1949) by all eligible Governments which have not already done so,

Noting that twenty-five States have become Parties to the Convention,

Further noting that a number of Governments have indicated their interest in taking the necessary steps for their ratification of or accession to the Convention,

Considering that the Convention establishes the main standards for development and safety of international road transport capable of world-wide application,

Recommends to the Economic and Social Council that those eligible Governments which have not done so be invited to ratify the Convention at an early date.

#### (b) SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO RATIFICATION OF THE CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON THE TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF PRIVATE ROAD VEHICLES, THE CONVENTION CONCERNING CUSTOMS FACILITIES FOR TOURING, AND THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL THERETO (1954)

42. The Commission noted from the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.2/173 and Add.1) on this matter that the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles had been ratified or

accessed to be ten countries, namely: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Ceylon, Denmark, Luxembourg, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America and Viet-Nam; and the Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring by twelve States: Austria, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, Ceylon, Denmark, Japan, Luxembourg, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America and Viet-Nam. It noted that the Additional Protocol to the latter Convention, relating to the Importation of Tourist Publicity Documents and Material, entered into force on 28 June 1956, having received the five required ratifications or accessions. The following seven States are now parties to the Protocol: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Japan, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. As the Conventions require fifteen ratifications they are not yet in force.

43. The Commission took note of related regional activities of ECE and ECLA, described in the Secretary-General's note. It also heard statements by the representatives of India, The Netherlands and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics regarding the steps their respective Governments were taking with a view to ratifying the Convention.

44. The Commission expressed the hope that the Customs Conventions would enter into force in the near future, as the progress of ratifications had been satisfactory. The Commission considered that the Conventions should attain world-wide participation at an early date. It adopted unanimously the following resolution:

### Resolution 3

#### SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO RATIFICATION OF THE CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON THE TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF PRIVATE ROAD VEHICLES; THE CONVENTION CONCERNING CUSTOMS FACILITIES FOR TOURING, AND THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL THERETO (1954)

##### The Transport and Communications Commission

1. Notes with satisfaction the progress achieved with respect to ratifications of the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, the Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring, and the Additional Protocol thereto;

2. Considers that further action to hasten the bringing into force of the above Conventions is desirable;

3. Recommends to the Economic and Social Council that Governments of States eligible to become Parties to the international instruments listed above be invited to ratify them at an early date, so as to facilitate the development of international travel through simplified customs procedures.

#### (i) CO-ORDINATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF SPECIALIZED AGENCIES IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

45. The Commission had before it a note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/178) which describes, as at previous sessions, the interrelated activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies concerning transport and communications which had taken place since the preceding session.



46. The Commission noted that the co-operation of the specialized agencies with the United Nations and with each other had been smooth and effective, and that it had so far not been necessary to take any formal action to co-ordinate the activities of the specialized agencies in the field of transport and communications.

(j) INFORMATION ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

47. The Commission noted the information contained in the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.2/184) on this subject. The report described briefly the technical assistance projects in transport and communications throughout the world and indicated the number of experts and Fellows engaged in each field of transport and communications and the areas and countries to which they are assigned. The Commission further noted with satisfaction the arrangements made by the Secretary-General for continuing assistance being given in this sphere, including the transport and communications field, by the various units of the Secretariat, in formulating technical assistance projects, in reviewing their progress and in providing, where appropriate, experts for missions in the field.

48. The Commission noted that many of the technical assistance activities in connexion with transport and communications were undertaken conjointly with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) respectively, and that the United Nations had directly provided assistance in respect of road, rail, inland waterways and ports to a number of countries in Africa, Asia, the Far East and America. In addition, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is one of the organizations participating directly in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance.

49. The Commission further noted with satisfaction the technical assistance programme in the transport field set forth in a statement made by the representative of ILO.

(k) TRANSPORT STATISTICS

50. The Commission noted that national offices and international agencies have continued to give effect to the International Standard Definitions for Transport Statistics.<sup>2/</sup> The Commission also noted that the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration is providing expert advice in order to enable certain countries to engage in sample statistical surveys on road transport, thus helping to fill an important gap in existing data on this aspect of transport. It was noted that with regard to the recommendations of the Statistical Commission and the Transport and Communications Commission, embodied in the International Standard Definitions for Transport Statistics, certain additional work had been carried out in ECE. The Commission was informed that the Secretary-General wished to await further comments, and that any revisions suggested by Governments, views and comments would be requested from Member States and inter-governmental

bodies. The information received would then be communicated to the Commission.

(l) DISCRIMINATION IN TRANSPORT INSURANCE

51. At its seventh session, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed of developments on the subject of discrimination in transport insurance. The Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the International Monetary Fund had had the subject under consideration as a result of Economic and Social Council resolution 468 H (XV), which instructed the Secretary-General to bring to their notice for possible action the relevant resolutions of the Council and the Commission and the relevant study by the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/139).

52. The Commission at its eighth session had before it the notes of the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/179 and Add.1) reporting developments. In GATT, where the subject is now referred to as "contractual freedom in transport insurance", it was reported to the Contracting Parties at their ninth session that the evidence adduced regarding the unfavourable effects of restrictions in transport insurance on international trade, though sufficient to justify the Contracting Parties' pursuing the matter, was not sufficiently conclusive to warrant formal action. At the tenth session of the Contracting Parties (October to December 1955) a draft Recommendation for Elimination of Restrictions in regard to Transport Insurance was drawn up for submission to the eleventh session which commenced on 11 October 1956, at which, however, its consideration was deferred to the twelfth session in October 1957.

53. The International Monetary Fund considered that the subject continued to be of interest, that its position had not changed, and that it would follow carefully any action taken in the matter by any other international organizations, in particular GATT.

54. The International Chamber of Commerce continued its interest in the matter and published a brochure entitled Freedom of Transport Insurance, which was available to members of the Commission and which supports the above-mentioned draft recommendation of GATT.

55. The Commission noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Freedom of Insurance of the International Union of Marine Insurance had each submitted a report on the activities of the Committee to the Council of the Union at its meeting in Monte Carlo in September 1956.

56. The Commission noted these developments and also took note of views expressed by the International Union of Marine Insurance and by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States stressing the importance of the subject, and decided to keep the problem under review.

III. Licensing of motor-vehicle drivers  
(Agenda item 4)

57. The Commission considered this question at its seventh session<sup>3/</sup> on the basis of the note by the Secre-

<sup>2/</sup>Statistical Office of the United Nations, Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 8.

<sup>3/</sup>See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Nineteenth Session, Supplement No. 4, Section IV.



tary-General (E/CN.2/154 and Add.1). Its recommendations, contained in resolution 2 of that session, were accepted by the Economic and Social Council when it adopted resolution 567 C (XIX).

58. At its eighth session, the Commission continued its study of the question. Complying with the terms of Council resolution 567 C (XIX), the Secretary-General had invited Governments which had not previously submitted their observations on the minimum uniform regulations for the licensing of motor-vehicle drivers recommended by the Committee of Experts, to do so by 1 September 1956. In his communication to the Commission on this subject (E/CN.2/183 and Corr.1 and Add.1), the Secretary-General reported that the replies received from Governments continued to indicate agreement with the minimum recommended requirements. The Commission took note that the response from Governments has continued to be favourable to the recommendations.

59. Pursuant to Council resolution 567 C (XIX), the Secretary-General invited the co-operation in this matter of the International Touring Alliance, the International Automobile Federation and the Inter-American Federation of Automobile Clubs - jointly represented at the Council by the World Touring and Automobile Organization - and the International Transport Union, as outlined at the seventh session of the Commission. A study by the World Touring and Automobile Association of existing driver regulations in thirty-eight countries and territories, showing the extent to which the various recommendations are already covered by the regulations of these countries, indicates a substantial degree of uniformity of the laws and regulations of these countries to the recommendations.

60. The Commission noted that in accordance with its previous recommendations, the final text of the handbook entitled "Guiding Principles in the Medical Examination of Applicants for Motor-Vehicle Driving Permits" and a note entitled "Suggestions concerning Practical Tests to be carried out by Driving Examiners" were prepared by the Consultant Group on Medical Requirements for the Licensing of Motor-Vehicle Drivers convened by the World Health Organization (WHO) from 29 August to 2 September 1955. The Secretary-General, upon receipt of this material, circulated it as document E/CN.2/133/Add.2 to Governments in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 468 E (XV) and 567 C (XIX), and invited them to consider the contents thereof in connexion with their domestic regulations and practices in this field.

61. The Commission agreed that in order to bring the project to its completion it was still necessary to revise those recommendations of the Committee of Experts which deal with mental and physical fitness and which the Committee of Experts considered as provisional. The Commission was informed of the progress achieved in the meantime on the substance of this question by the above-mentioned Consultant Group of WHO, and concluded that the remaining work might be performed by the Secretariat in consultation with WHO. The representative of WHO made a statement on further assistance which this Organization would be in a position to provide in this respect. The Commission also heard a statement by the representa-

tive of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on the development of standards relative to mental and physical fitness of professional drivers.

62. The Commission adopted unanimously the following resolution:

#### Resolution 4

##### LICENSING OF MOTOR-VEHICLE DRIVERS

##### Requirements Relative To Mental And Physical Fitness

##### The Transport and Communications Commission,

Noting that the World Health Organization has completed a handbook for medical practitioners entitled "Guiding Principles in the Medical Examination of Applicants for Motor-Vehicle Driving Permits", together with certain "Suggestions concerning Practical Tests to be carried out by Driving Examiners", and

Noting further that high standards of physical and mental fitness of motor-vehicle drivers, of the type recommended by the World Health Organization, are regarded as an important element in the achievement of highway safety, and

Noting further that national regulatory authorities would welcome such recommendations as a basis for the improvement of existing standards for driving fitness, and that endorsement of these standards by the Transport and Communications Commission and their dissemination to all Governments should strengthen the position of the administrative authorities in improving driver qualifications,

##### Recommends to the Economic and Social Council that:

(a) The Governments of all States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies again be urged to give their serious consideration to the contents of the handbook for medical practitioners in developing their domestic regulations and practices in the field;

(b) The Secretary-General be invited:

(i) To complete, in consultation with the World Health Organization, the revision of the provisional recommendations on mental and physical fitness of drivers prepared by the Committee of Experts on Licensing of Motor-Vehicle Drivers and included in their report to the Transport and Communications Commission (E/CN.2/133 and Add.1);

(ii) To circulate the revised text for their comments to Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies, as a supplement to the recommendations on minimum uniform driver licensing requirements;

(c) The Secretary-General be further requested to report to the ninth session of the Commission on further progress by the Governments in strengthening their licensing standards relative to the physical and mental fitness of applicants for driving licences.

63. The Commission was of the opinion that a more general reciprocal recognition should be encouraged of valid domestic licences of drivers of motor vehicles in international traffic. In that connexion, the Commission noted the action recently taken in ECE with a view to

broadening the use of domestic driving permits in international traffic. The Commission agreed that due attention should be given in this respect to solving the administrative difficulties which the recognition of domestic licences could cause in countries where the language of the licence is difficult to understand.

64. The Commission adopted unanimously the following resolution:

### Resolution 5

#### LICENSING OF MOTOR-VEHICLE DRIVERS

#### Reciprocal recognition of domestic driving permits in accordance with the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic

##### The Transport and Communications Commission,

Noting that an early adoption in all countries of the model domestic driving permit given in Annex 9 of the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic is not likely, and

Noting further that many countries already recognize in international traffic forms of domestic driving permits that do not conform to the model, and

Noting further that neither the model domestic permit nor the international permit is made obligatory by article 24 of the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic, although use of the latter may be a convenience to drivers whose domestic permits are not in the language of the country in which they are travelling,

Recommends to the Economic and Social Council:

(a) That Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies be urged to recognize in the international traffic any valid domestic driving permit issued by the competent authority after proof of competence;

(b) That where language difficulties may prevail, and where issuance of an international driving permit is not feasible or convenient, arrangements be made to provide an official translation of the domestic permit in the languages of the countries in which it is proposed to use the permit, either by the issuing Government or by an automobile association empowered to act for it, to be attached to the domestic permit; and

(c) That the Secretary-General be requested to inquire of Governments as to the steps they intend to take with a view to implementing this recommendation.

#### **IV. Other problems in the field of international road transport**

##### (Agenda item 5)

65. In accordance with resolution 272 (X) of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission has reviewed periodically developments concerning international road transport in order to advise the Council on further international action to be taken in this field.

66. At its seventh session, the Commission continued its consideration of the question of fiscal charges on foreign private motor vehicles and decided, in view of the studies being undertaken at the regional level, to review these questions at its eighth session.

67. The Commission at its eighth session took note of the Secretary-General's report on this item (E/CN.2/180) containing information concerning the action undertaken under the auspices of ECE with regard to the question of fiscal charges. It noted that in May 1956 a new Convention on the Taxation of Road Vehicles for Private Use in International Traffic had been opened for signature at Geneva. This Convention is to supersede the Convention on the Taxation of Foreign Motor Vehicles, concluded at the 1931 European Conference on Road Traffic convened by the League of Nations.

68. The Commission further noted the action undertaken by ECE and by the Council of Europe with regard to the question of compulsory insurance of foreign motor vehicles. The former body has not yet completed its consideration of measures to improve the system of international motor insurance card (the "green card" scheme) in countries where compulsory insurance has not been introduced. The Secretary-General's report mentioned also that the Inter-American Federation of Automobile Clubs had been asked by the Sixth Inter-American Travel Congress to complete the necessary technical studies for the introduction of the "green card" system in Latin America. It was noted that while the scheme had been adopted fairly widely in Europe, it seemed still too early to form any conclusions as to its world-wide applicability. It was suggested that this system might be usefully examined by ECAFE for possible application in Asia and the Far East.

#### **V. International travel questions**

##### (Agenda item 6)

69. This question was included in the Commission's agenda in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 35 (IV), under which the Commission has been entrusted with the task of advising the Council on travel matters and of reporting to it from time to time as may be appropriate.

70. Since the seventh session of the Commission, the Council, at its nineteenth session, considered the item and adopted resolution 563 (XIX) on "Development of international travel", in the operative part of which the Council invited States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies: (a) to examine the beneficial effect which increased tourism could have on their internal economy, and the part it plays in international trade; (b) to survey their tourist facilities to determine existing deficiencies, and to encourage the development of transportation, hotel and other needed facilities, amenities and attractions; (c) to give adequate support to the official organizations engaged in the development of tourism, and to encourage their co-operation with private agencies in this field; (d) to simplify wherever practicable the entry and exit procedures and formalities applicable to tourists, and to co-operate in the development of international travel arrangements designed to facilitate tourism; (e) to encourage the exchange of technical advice between countries possessing well-developed tourist programmes and facilities and those with less experience. The Council also requested the organs of the United Nations and the appropriate specialized agencies to give favourable consideration to constructive projects which are within their competence and are designed to increase tourist

facilities and to promote travel; it further requested the Secretary-General to study the statistics available relating to tourist travel and to report to the Statistical Commission as early as possible with a view to the establishment of uniform definitions, standards and methods. Finally, the Council invited the non-governmental organizations concerned with tourism to continue and increase their efforts to promote international travel, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Council at its twenty-third session a report on the measures taken in response to this resolution.

71. The Secretary-General brought to the attention of the Commission developments in the field of travel, including the activities of the specialized agencies and other international organizations set out in a report entitled "Development of International Travel, its present increasing volume and future prospects", prepared for consideration by the Economic and Social Council at its twenty-third session, (E/2933 and Add.1 and 2) as requested by the Council in its aforesaid resolution.

72. The Commission heard statements by the representatives of Venezuela, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ecuador, India and Chile concerning activities undertaken in these countries for the development of international tourism. The representative of the United States commented on the need to expand hotel facilities and referred to a resolution on the subject, adopted on 25 October 1956 by the General Assembly of the International Union of Official Travel Organizations. Information was also provided by the representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) concerning measures taken to remove barriers to international travel. The Commission noted with satisfaction these developments, and considered the comprehensive documentation in the Secretary-General's report as having a permanent value; it placed on record its hope that further progress would be achieved in this field. It adopted unanimously the following resolution:

#### Resolution 6

#### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL QUESTIONS

The Transport and Communications Commission,

Noting that many Governments have responded to resolution 563 (XIX) of the Economic and Social Council by supplying information relative to their activities in promoting and facilitating international travel, and

Noting further that the information supplied shows that Governments recognize the importance of international travel and the desirability of encouraging its development as set forth in the aforesaid resolution, and

Noting further that the existing international organizational machinery for joint action in the field of travel development appears adequate to meet present requirements,

Recommends to the Economic and Social Council:

(a) To invite Governments which have not yet responded to resolution 563 (XIX) to submit the desired

information to the Secretary-General as promptly as possible so that the report can be completed;

(b) To request Governments, the organs of the United Nations, the appropriate specialized agencies, and other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations in this field, to continue their efforts to encourage international travel for its economic, social and cultural benefits; and

(c) Further to request the Transport and Communications Commission and the Secretary-General to follow developments in the field of travel and to report to the Council any matters which would make its further action desirable.

### VI. Passports and frontier formalities

#### (Agenda item 7)

73. In the Economic and Social Council resolution 227 F (IX), the Secretary-General was requested to continue to follow progress in the field of passports and frontier formalities, and to keep the Commission informed. The Commission has regularly examined reports by the Secretary-General on this item and has reviewed the progress made by Governments in the implementation of the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities held at Geneva in 1947.

74. At its seventh session, the Commission considered that, in view of the time that had elapsed since the last inquiry addressed to Governments on the subject, it would be desirable to address a new inquiry to Governments in order to secure official information on the progress achieved with regard to the implementation of those recommendations. Accordingly, following a recommendation by the Commission, the Economic and Social Council adopted on 20 May 1955 resolution 567 D (XIX) inviting the Secretary-General to address a new inquiry to Governments and to report to the Commission at its eighth session. By the same resolution, Governments were asked that, as a recommended practice, they consider the possibility of making use of the ICAO standard visa format for international travel by all means of transport.

75. The Commission, at its present session, noted a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/185) containing a summary of the developments since the seventh session of the Transport and Communications Commission and a survey of the progress achieved with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts, based on the replies from Governments to the Secretary-General's inquiry. It was noted that a large measure of agreement existed concerning the desirability of further implementation of the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts. Support was expressed for continuing efforts in this field, in particular by administrative arrangements between neighbouring States or at a regional level. The Commission heard a statement by the International Chamber of Commerce expressing the hope that Governments would make a continuing effort to reduce or eliminate the invisible barriers to the movement of business and tourist travel across national boundaries.

76. Having considered the report of the Secretary-General, the Commission adopted unanimously the following resolution:

### Resolution 7

#### PASSPORTS AND FRONTIER FORMALITIES

##### The Transport and Communications Commission,

Noting the Secretary-General's report entitled "Passports and Frontier Formalities" (E/CN.2/185),

Considering that international action towards the simplification, reduction and unification of passports and frontier formalities should continue in the direction of implementing the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, held at Geneva in 1947,

Noting the results achieved by administrative arrangements between neighbouring countries or countries located in the same region,

1. Recommends to the Economic and Social Council that the Governments of States Members of the United Nations be invited to continue their efforts toward the implementation of the recommendations of the 1947 Meeting of Experts, in particular by administrative arrangements between neighbouring countries or countries located in the same region;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to follow progress in this field and to report to the Commission at its ninth session.

### **VII. Transport of dangerous goods**

#### (Agenda item 8)

77. The Economic and Social Council in resolution 567 E (XIX), adopted on the recommendation of the Transport and Communications Commission in resolution 4 at its seventh session,<sup>4/</sup> invited the Secretary-General to circulate the report of the Committee of Experts (E/CN.2/143) to Governments of States Members of the United Nations and of any of the specialized agencies and to the interested international organizations, requesting their views and comments; to reconvene the Committee of Experts in order to establish final recommendations, recommend a procedure for keeping the list of principal dangerous goods up to date and consider further the problem of packaging; to circulate to Governments and interested international organizations the final recommendations; and to report to the Commission at its eighth session on the progress in this matter.

78. The Secretary-General accordingly circulated the report on 22 June 1955. The Committee of Experts reconvened and held its second session at Geneva from 16 August to 12 September 1956, established final recommendations which were later duly circulated to Governments and interested international organizations, and made a report on its second session to the Commission.

79. The Committee of Experts during this session held three informal meetings with the Group of Experts

<sup>4/</sup>See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Nineteenth Session, Supplement No. 4, Section VII.

on Dangerous Substances of the International Labour Office during which matters of common interest were discussed.

80. The Commission at its eighth session had before it an explanatory note prepared by the Secretary-General on the transport of dangerous goods (E/CN.2/171), the report on its second session submitted by the Committee of Experts (E/CN.2/165) and the recommendations prepared by the Committee of Experts concerning the classification, listing and labelling of dangerous goods and shipping papers for such goods (E/CN.2/170).<sup>5/</sup>

81. The explanatory note reviewed developments since the seventh session of the Commission and drew attention particularly to the recommendations in the Committee's report on its second session, whereby it was advocated that a small permanent committee be set up within the framework of the United Nations for the purpose of keeping the list of principal dangerous goods up to date and assigning new dangerous goods to appropriate classes. The committee would consist of not more than nine qualified experts from countries having a substantial interest in the international transport of dangerous goods. This body would preferably be a committee functioning on the usual lines of United Nations bodies or, if this were not acceptable, a committee of experts placed at the disposal of the Secretary-General by interested Governments of Member States at their own expense. In addition to completing the list of dangerous goods and keeping it up to date, the committee would prepare a system of code numbers for such goods and allot the code number, pursue the task of standardizing regulations governing packaging and performance tests and drawing the appropriate conclusions as regards labelling, and study related matters.

82. In the report, the Committee of Experts recommended that the problem of packaging be further studied by the above-mentioned permanent committee, the Secretariat arrange for an expert to make a comparative study on packaging which would cover the various systems of regulations on which it had already received information.

83. The Committee of Experts felt that, pending the achievement of minimum uniformity among the various regulations on packaging on a world-wide basis and for the various modes of transport, Governments should, to the fullest possible extent, allow goods packed in accordance with the provisions of foreign regulations which conform to the requisite safety standards to enter their territory. This might be brought about by bilateral agreements, which would make possible an expansion of international trade in dangerous goods. The Commission noted this view of the Committee of Experts.

84. The report also mentioned resolution 22 of the International Conference on Safety of Life at Sea (London, 1948) which recommended the preparation of international regulations for the transport of dangerous goods by sea. The report explained that one Government had expressed the opinion that a conference should be held, and that another Government considered it advisable

<sup>5/</sup>United Nations publication, Sales No.:1956.VIII.1.

to accept the recommendations of the experts as the nearest approach to international regulations covering all forms of transport; agreement on these could then be followed by a special meeting of maritime Powers to decide on additional special precautions for sea transport only.

85. Paragraphs 15 to 21 of the report described the three informal meetings held by the Committee of Experts with the Group of Experts on Dangerous Substances of the International Labour Office. The two groups successfully co-ordinated their work for the most part, but the attention of the Economic and Social Council is drawn to the situation resulting from the difficulties experienced by these two groups in attempting to reach full agreement on a common symbol for corrosive substances.

86. The explanatory note of the Secretary-General also referred to the view on transport of dangerous goods of the Inland Transport Committee of ECE, whereby it considered that its existing resolution 95 on the subject still held good, pending the results of the work of the experts at world level.

87. The Commission heard statements by representatives of international organizations. Referring to the informal joint meetings of the ILO Groups of Experts and of the United Nations Committee of Experts, the representative of the ILO said that such meetings were very useful and that agreement had been reached on a number of points. In view, however, of the fact that it had not been found possible at these meetings to agree on a common symbol for corrosives, the ILO Governing Body at its last session had decided to defer until its session of February-March 1957 its decision on the report of its Group of Experts. It had requested the Director-General of the ILO meanwhile to pursue consultations with the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to examining the question further and seeking an agreement between the two organizations. The representative of UNESCO stressed the main points in a communication from the Director-General of his organization suggesting the adoption of a symbol for radioactive substances different from the one recommended by the Committee of Experts. The representative of the World Federation of Trade Unions pointed out the importance for the workers of the problem of the transport of dangerous goods and felt that from the point of view of the workers the symbol proposed by the ILO had much to commend it. The representative of the International Air Transport Association explained why preference should be given to the symbol recommended by the United Nations, which was the symbol of the Association. The representative of the International Chamber of Commerce said that while his organization had noted with great satisfaction the progress achieved by the Committee of Experts, it regretted that two different labels for corrosives had been suggested. The existence of these two labels would not only increase costs but would also cause confusion in the case of transport of corrosives. It was hoped that a compromise could be reached in the not too distant future.

88. The Commission commended the Committee of Experts for the results achieved. The representative of the United Kingdom expressed the view that the Commit-

tee's recommendations, which were the results of compromises, formed a good basis for bringing existing codes into harmony, and that Governments and international organizations should be urged to bring their practices into line with these recommendations. The representative of the United States, while paying tribute to the work accomplished, stated that the responsible officials in his Government had not had time to study the recommendations in detail and could not make commitments. The representative of the USSR and other members of the Committee emphasized the practical value of the work achieved which should, therefore, be taken advantage of by Governments and interested international organizations. The representative of Poland suggested that the Commission's decisions be made known to ECE in time for a forthcoming meeting of experts on the transport of dangerous goods which it had convened.

89. The Commission examined at length the way in which the Committee of Experts, to be entrusted with the continuation of the work, should be set up. There was some feeling that, in view of the practical importance of the problem and of the fact that this Committee would be a small one and would not meet often, it should be constituted as a regular United Nations body and its expenses should be borne by the United Nations. Only in this manner would it be possible to secure the co-operation of experts who, although highly qualified, would not be in a position to participate in this work should their Government be unable to bear the cost.

90. The Commission adopted unanimously the following resolution:

### Resolution 8

#### TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS

##### The Transport and Communications Commission,

Having noted the report of the United Nations Committee of Experts on the transport of Dangerous Goods (E/CN.2/165),

1. Commends the Experts for the effectiveness with which they have carried out their instructions;

2. Draws attention to the large and increasing proportion of goods in international trade which have inherently dangerous properties;

3. Considers that the recommendations of the Committee of Experts (E/CN.2/170) form a basis for further work towards overcoming disharmony among regional and national regulations and codes of practice relating to individual modes of transport which presently hampers the development of this important trade;

4. Recommends the Economic and Social Council

(a) To request the Secretary-General to set up a committee consisting of not more than nine qualified experts from countries interested in the international transport of dangerous goods to:

(i) Revise as may be necessary and keep up to date the list of dangerous goods proposed by the Committee of Experts, taking into account existing practices in the field of transportation and the extent of their usage;

(ii) Allot to each substance a number for ready identification;



(iii) Study further the problem of packing;

(iv) Study related matters; and

(v) Report progress to the Transport and Communications Commission;

(b) To request the Secretary-General to invite Governments of countries interested in the international transport of dangerous goods to make available at his request experts to serve on the above committee, provided that he be authorized, if he finds that this expense can be covered under budgetary appropriations, to cover some or all of the expense involved out of the regular budget of the United Nations;

(c) To request the Secretary-General to arrange for a consultant to make a comparative study of the systems of regulations on packing on which he has already received information, so as to make it possible for the Committee of Experts to pursue the study on packing as provided under (iii) above;

(d) To urge Governments, regional economic commissions and international organizations concerned to take note of the recommendations of the Committee of Experts and of any further recommendations by the committee referred to in (a) above, and to keep the Secretary-General currently informed of the extent to which they can bring their own practices into general conformity with them;

(e) To invite the Secretary-General to continue his consultations with the Director-General of the International Labour Office on the best means of avoiding any overlapping of the work of the above committee with any work being undertaken in this field by the International Labour Organisation.

## VIII. Study by the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East on ocean freight rates

### (Agenda item 9)

91. The Commission had before it a note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/169), the Annex to which was "Ocean Freight Rates", a report prepared by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) with the approval of that Commission, obtained in 1955. This report is part of a project to study ocean freight rates as they affect the trade of the countries of the region. At its meeting in January 1956, the ECAFE Committee on Industry and Trade asked the secretariat to enlarge the scope of the project to include the influence of available shipping facilities on the rate structure. The secretariat, in undertaking the study, was asked to seek the co-operation of the Transport and Communications Commission, as well as the governments of the countries concerned and other appropriate international agencies.

92. The Transport and Communications Commission took note of this report, on which several members of the Commission made extensive comments. One member stressed the world-wide character of ocean freight rates and questioned the advisability of considering them on a regional basis. Another member agreed that a world-wide study was desirable but that a regional study could usefully be made in the meantime.

93. In regard to paragraph 72 of the report of the ECAFE secretariat (E/CN.2/169, annex) it was stated that protective efforts by countries in order to build up their own merchant marines had always resulted in increased freight rates. To this it was answered that there should be no objection to a country having its own merchant marine and that the question of whether there were flag discrimination involved a definition of terms.

94. Doubt was expressed in regard to the statement in paragraph 58 of the report that ship-owning countries carried their trade directly in proportion to their share of world tonnage.

95. Equally there existed doubt regarding the statements that rates on liners were generally higher than rates on tramps and that rates on liners do not reflect declines in rates on tramps as quickly or as widely as they do in the case of increases in such rates. Comments were made with regard to the statement in paragraph 29 that water transport was no longer cheaper than land transport. It was felt that this question needed further elaboration.

96. It was generally agreed that delays in port were one of the main causes of increased freight rates and that first priority should be given to improving and expanding the existing berthing and handling capabilities.

97. It was observed that ocean freight rates had increased 50 per cent between 1952 and 1956 and that a further increase of 15 or 20 per cent had occurred since the military action at the Suez Canal.

98. It was pointed out that there was a great increase in sea-borne trade in Asia between 1938 and 1954, as indicated in paragraph 6 of the ECAFE report. It was brought to the attention of the Commission that there appeared to be an error in this paragraph of the report, which stated that the Asian share of the volume of world sea-borne trade rose from 32.3 per cent in 1938 to 40.2 per cent in 1954. This error was apparently based on a misinterpretation of the source quoted, in that the figures for total world tonnage loaded had been compared with area tonnage loaded and unloaded. This would result in an error of about 100 per cent, so that the correct figures should be 16.15 per cent in 1938 and 20.1 per cent in 1954, instead of 32.3 per cent and 40.2 per cent respectively.

99. The idea was also expressed that problems concerning freight rates were best solved through frank discussions with the shipowners themselves.

100. The International Chamber of Commerce restated its view that all forms of flag discrimination impede the free flow of international trade.

101. It was decided that the records of the discussion should be forwarded to ECAFE for its guidance.

## IX. Work programme and priorities for transport and communications projects

### (Agenda item 10)

102. The Commission at its seventh session noted the Secretary-General's report on this item (E/CN.2/163), in which attention was drawn to the developments in



this field and in particular to Council resolution 497 C (XVI) referring to the review of work programmes by the Commission, to Council resolution 557 A (XVIII) referring to publications and studies, and also to General Assembly resolution 789 (VIII) concerning the control and limitation of documentation. The Secretary-General also appended to his report a tentative work programme based on his periodic report to the Council at its eighteenth session - prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 533 C (VI) - indicating the work programme of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, which included a section listing transport and communications projects.

103. At its eighth session, the Commission took note of the Secretary-General's further report (E/CN.2/186), in which attention was drawn to subsequent developments in this field and in particular to Council resolution 630 A I (XXII), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to produce a further report on the lines of the document entitled "Observations on the Work Programme of the Council and on the Financial Implications of the Council's Action" (E/2903), including comments on work in the social field as mentioned in paragraph 4 of that document and on the work programmes of the regional economic commissions and the functional commissions. The Council recommended to the specialized agencies and requested the regional economic commissions and the functional commissions to pay special attention to further concentration of their activities on major economic, social and human rights problems, as may be appropriate, and to the more efficient co-ordination of the said activities, and to include a special section thereon in their reports to the Council. It also decided that its Co-ordination Committee should meet one week before the opening of its twenty-fourth session in order to consider the report of the Secretary-General requested above and the relevant sections of the reports of the specialized agencies, regional economic commissions and functional commissions, and to submit its recommendations to the Council for consideration at the same session.

104. With this resolution in mind, the Secretary-General prepared a tentative work programme (E/CN.2/186, annex) on the basis of the present programme,<sup>6/</sup> taking into consideration subsequent developments. In accordance with Council resolution 630 A I (XXII) the Secretary-General suggested several cuts in the existing programme.

105. When considering the proposed work programme, the Commission, in line with the provisions of Council resolution 567 F (XIX), gave emphasis to those existing projects which are of importance for integrated economic development and for international trade. Furthermore, in the light of Council resolution 630 A I, the Commission accepted some of the suggested cuts in the existing programme, whereas some other projects included in the Secretary-General's suggestions for reductions were left in the work programme in view of new developments which, in the Commission's opinion, made this necessary; as to the items omitted, it was considered that instead of bringing them forward regularly on the agenda of the future

<sup>6/</sup>See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Nineteenth Session, Supplement No. 4, Section X, as amended by Council resolution 567 F (XIX).

sessions of the Commission, it would be preferable for the Secretary-General to follow and propose each of them for inclusion in the agenda only if warranted by developments requiring the attention of the Commission.

106. The Commission further noted that the order in which the projects were listed in the various categories in the proposed programme had no bearing upon the degree of their priority within those categories.

107. During the consideration of this item, regret was voiced by some members at the fact that the project "Preparation and Editing of the Transport and Communications Review" had been deleted from the work programme of the Commission in accordance with Council resolution 567 F (XIX).

108. Some members thought that it might be useful to bring to the attention of the Commission, at its next session, developments and activities of some organizations in the railway field.

109. Finally, the Secretariat drew the attention of the Commission to the terms of Council resolution 590 A (XX) on "General review of the development and co-ordination of the economic, social and human rights programmes and activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies as a whole", in accordance with paragraph 10 of part I of this resolution.

110. The Commission adopted unanimously the following resolution:

### Resolution 9

#### WORK PROGRAMME AND PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS

##### The Transport and Communications Commission,

Having examined the Secretary-General's report on the work programme and priorities for transport and communications projects (E/CN.2/186),

Bearing in mind the decisions it has taken on the various items on the agenda of its eighth session and the considerations which prompted its action in each case as set forth in the present report,

Recommends to the Economic and Social Council the following programme of work, listing each project as continuing or ad hoc and indicating its category of priority:

##### Work programme and priorities for transport and communications projects

###### A. Continuing projects

###### 1. First priority

(1) Contact with and reporting upon the activities of regional economic commissions and other regional bodies in the field of inland transport, including problems of co-ordination of inland transport - and upon developments in regions where such bodies do not exist - ensuring where appropriate that regional action is co-ordinated on a world-wide basis (Council resolution 2/7);

(2) Review of progress of work of those specialized agencies, other inter-governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations which are wholly or partly

in the field of transport and communications with particular reference to the co-ordination of their activities (Council resolution 2/7);

(3) Review of developments in the field of international road transport with particular reference to international action required at the world-wide level to supplement the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic [Council resolution 272 (X)];

(4) Consultations with Governments of those eligible States which have not so far ratified the Convention on the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) with a view to ascertaining from each of them how far they have advanced with ratification measures and to hastening in so far as it is possible the entry into force of the Convention [Council resolution 518 C (XVII)];

(5) Review of progress in implementation of recommendations of the Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities [Council resolution 227 F (IX) and 567 D (XIX)];

(6) International developments in the field of travel [Council resolution 35 (IV) and 563 (XIX)];

(7) Preparation for and substantive servicing of a committee of experts to study and report on certain aspects of the problem of the transport of dangerous goods [Council resolution 468 G (XV) and 567 E (XIX)];

(8) Assistance to the Technical Assistance Administration, with respect to transport and communications matters, in planning projects and participating in them as and when needed, in selecting and briefing experts, reviewing reports and screening applications for fellowships [General Assembly resolution 886 (IX)];

(9) Preparation of texts and provision of research material concerning transport, for surveys of world economic conditions and trends [Council resolution 26 (IV) and General Assembly resolution 118 (II)].

## 2. Second priority

(1) Pending the coming into being of the IMCO, review of problems which will ultimately fall to that organization:

Giving effect, in consultation with the Governments represented at the London Conference on Pollution of Sea Water of 1954, to the request expressed by that Conference in its resolution No. 8 on the collection and dissemination by the appropriate organ of the United Nations of technical information about oil pollution, and keeping the Transport and Communications Commission informed of the performance of this task by the Secretariat [Council resolution 537 A (XVIII)];

(2) Collaboration with the Statistical Commission and the Statistical Office in consideration of the problem of unification of transport and travel statistics [Council resolution 2/7 and 563 (XIX)].

## B. Ad Hoc Projects

### 1. First priority

(1) Uniform system of road signs and signals [Council resolution 518 A (XVII) and 567 B (XIX)];

(2) Uniform regulations for the licensing of motor-vehicle drivers [Council resolution 468 E (XV) and 567 C (XIX)];

(3) Question of inter-governmental action on the unification of tonnage measurement [Council resolution 298 B (XI)].

## 2. Second priority

(1) Study on discrimination in transport insurance - in collaboration with GATT and the International Monetary Fund [Council resolution 468 H (XV)];

(2) Preparation of comprehensive bibliographies on transport and communications questions as and when needed.

## X. Draft resolutions submitted by the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

111. The Commission recommends the following draft resolutions to the Council for adoption. The Commission's reasons for proposing draft resolutions are set forth in the preambles to the relevant resolutions of the Commission itself which appear in the preceding sections of the present report.

### A

#### The Economic and Social Council,

Takes note of the report of the Transport and Communications Commission on its eighth session.

### B

#### UNIFICATION OF MARITIME TONNAGE MEASUREMENT

Having noted the opinion of the Transport and Communications Commission that it is necessary to continue the useful work already done in bringing about greater uniformity between the regulations relating to the tonnage measurement of ships,

Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To establish a group of experts to prepare and present for consideration of the Transport and Communications Commission, at its ninth session, a report on the differences between the main rules governing tonnage measurement at present in force and their apparent shortcomings;

(b) To invite the Governments of those countries which indicate their interest in the unification of tonnage measurement to make available at his request and at their own expense experts to serve on the above group.

### C

#### RATIFICATION OF THE 1949 CONVENTION ON ROAD TRAFFIC

#### The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 603 (XXI) relative to the Convention on Road Traffic adopted at the United Nations Conference on Road and Motor Traffic (Geneva, 19 September 1949),

Bearing in mind the consideration of the Transport and Communications Commission that the Convention

establishes the main standards for development and safety of international road transport capable of world-wide application,

Recommends to those eligible Governments which have not done so to ratify the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic at an early date.

#### D

### RATIFICATION OF THE CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON THE TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF PRIVATE ROAD VEHICLES: THE CONVENTION CONCERNING CUSTOMS FACILITIES FOR TOURING, AND THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL THERETO (1954)

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the considerations and recommendations of the Transport and Communications Commission,

Recommends that all eligible Governments should ratify at an early date the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, the Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring and the Additional Protocol thereto, so as to facilitate the development of international travel through simplified customs procedures.

#### E

### LICENSING OF MOTOR-VEHICLE DRIVERS

The Economic and Social Council,

Having examined the recommendations of the Transport and Communications Commission concerning both the development of standards of physical and mental fitness of motor-vehicle drivers and the broadening of use of valid domestic driving permits in international traffic, in accordance with the requirements of the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic,

1. Urges Governments of all States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies to give their serious consideration to the contents of the handbook for medical practitioners entitled "Guiding Principles in the Medical Examination of Applicants for Motor-Vehicle Driving Permits", together with certain "Suggestions concerning Practical Tests to be carried out by Driving Examiners" already circulated to them by the Secretary-General (E/CN.2/133/Add.2) in accordance with Council resolution 567 C (XIX);

2. Recommends to Governments to recognize in international traffic any valid domestic driving permit issued by the competent authority after proof of competence;

3. Recommends further that where language difficulties may prevail, and where issuance of an international driving permit is not feasible or convenient, arrangements be made to provide an official translation of the domestic permit in the languages of the countries in which it is proposed to use the permit, either by the issuing Government or by an automobile association empowered to act for it, to be attached to the domestic permit; and

4. Invites the Secretary-General:

(i) To complete, in consultation with the World Health Organization, the revision of the provisional recommendations on mental and physical fitness of drivers prepared by the Committee of Experts on Licensing of Motor-Vehicle Drivers and included in their report to the Transport and Communications Commission (E/CN.2/133 and Add.1);

(ii) To circulate the revised text for their comments to Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies, as a supplement to the recommendations on minimum uniform driver licensing requirements;

(iii) To inquire of Governments as to the steps they intend to take with a view to implementing the recommendation of the Council on the reciprocal recognition of domestic driving permits;

5. Invites further the Secretary-General to report to the ninth session of the Commission on further progress by the Governments in strengthening their licensing standards relative to the physical and mental fitness of applicants for driving licenses.

#### F

### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL QUESTIONS

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting that many Governments have responded to its resolution 563 (XIX) concerning the development of international travel by supplying information relative to their activities in promoting and facilitating international travel,

Noting further that the information supplied shows that Governments recognize the importance of international travel and the desirability of encouraging its development as set forth in the aforesaid resolution, and

Noting further that the existing international organizational machinery for joint action in the field of travel development appears adequate to meet present requirements,

Bearing in mind the recommendations of the Transport and Communications Commission as to further action which might be desirable concerning this question;

1. Invites Governments which have not yet responded to resolution 563 (XIX) to submit the desired information to the Secretary-General as promptly as possible so that the report can be completed;

2. Requests Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies, the organs of the United Nations, the appropriate specialized agencies, and other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations in this field, to continue their efforts to encourage international travel for its economic, social and cultural benefits; and

3. Further requests the Transport and Communications Commission and the Secretary-General to follow

developments in the field of travel and to report to the Council any matters which would make its further action desirable.

## G

### PASSPORTS AND FRONTIER FORMALITIES

#### The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the opinion of the Transport and Communications Commission that the international action towards the simplification, reduction and unification of passports and frontier formalities should continue in the direction of implementing the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, held at Geneva in 1947,

Recommends to Governments of States Members of the United Nations that they continue their efforts towards the implementation of the recommendations of the 1947 Meeting of Experts, in particular by administrative arrangements between neighbouring countries or countries located in the same region.

## H

### TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS

#### The Economic and Social Council,

Having noted the statement of the Transport and Communications Commission that there is a large and increasing proportion of goods in international trade which have inherently dangerous properties, and the opinion of the Commission that the recommendations of the United Nations Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods in the report on its second session (E/CN.2/165) and the recommendations concerning the classification, listing and labelling of dangerous goods and shipping papers for such goods (E/CN.2/170) prepared by the Committee, form a basis for further work toward overcoming disharmony among regional and national regulations and codes of practice on the transport of dangerous goods relating to individual modes of transport, which presently hampers the development of this important trade,

#### 1. Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To set up a committee consisting of not more than nine qualified experts from countries interested in the international transport of dangerous goods to:

(i) Revise as may be necessary and keep up to date the list of dangerous goods proposed by the Committee

of Experts, taking into account existing practices in the field of transportation and the extent of their usage;

(ii) Allot to each substance a number for ready identification;

(iii) Study further the problem of packing;

(iv) Study related matters; and

(v) Report progress to the Transport and Communications Commission;

(b) To invite Governments of countries interested in the international transport of dangerous goods to make available at his request experts to serve on the above committee, provided that he be authorized, if he finds that this expense can be covered under budgetary appropriations, to cover some or all of the expense involved out of the regular budget of the United Nations;

(c) To arrange for a consultant to make a comparative study of the systems of regulations on packing on which he has already received information, so as to make it possible for the Committee of Experts to pursue the study on packing as provided under (iii) above;

2. Urges Governments, regional economic commissions and international organizations concerned to take note of the recommendations of the Committee of Experts and of any further recommendations by the committee referred to in (a) above, and to keep the Secretary-General currently informed of the extent to which they can bring their own practices into general conformity with them;

3. Invites the Secretary-General to continue his consultations with the Director-General of the International Labour Office on the best means of avoiding any overlapping of the work of the above committee with any work being undertaken in this field by the International Labour Organisation.

## I

### WORK PROGRAMME AND PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS

#### The Economic and Social Council,

Bearing in mind its resolutions 497 C (XVI), 557 A (XVIII) and 630 A (XXII), approves the work programme and priorities for transport and communications projects recommended by the Transport and Communications Commission in resolution 9 adopted at its eighth session.

## ANNEXES

### Annex 1

#### Agenda of the eighth session of the Transport and Communications Commission

1. Election of officers of the Commission.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Communications by the Secretariat:
  - (a) Regional developments in the field of inland transport;
  - (b) Co-ordination of inland transport;
  - (c) Uniform system of road signs and signals;
  - (d) Unification of maritime tonnage measurement;
  - (e) Pollution of sea water;
  - (f) Situation with respect to ratification of the Convention on the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization;
  - (g) Situation with respect to ratification of the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic;
  - (h) Situation with respect to ratification of the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, the Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring, and the Additional Protocol thereto (1954);
  - (i) Co-ordination of the activities of specialized agencies in the field of transport and communications;
  - (j) Information on technical assistance activities in the field of transport and communications;
  - (k) Transport statistics;
  - (l) Discrimination in transport insurance.
4. Licensing of motor-vehicle drivers.
5. Other problems in the field of international road transport.
6. International travel questions.
7. Passports and frontier formalities.
8. Transport of dangerous goods.
9. Study by the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East on ocean freight rates.
10. Work programme and priorities for transport and communications projects.
11. Any other business.
12. Adoption of the report to the Economic and Social Council.

### Annex II

#### Financial implications of decisions taken during the eighth session of the Transport and Communications Commission

##### Statement by the Secretary-General

##### Unification of maritime tonnage measurements

1. Resolution 1 of the present report recommends the Economic and Social Council to request the Secretary-General to establish a group of experts to prepare a report on the differences between the main rules governing tonnage measurements at present in force and their apparent shortcomings. The resolution further requests the Secretary-General to invite Governments interested to make available, at his request and at their own expense, experts to serve on the above group. It is the Secretary-General's understanding that all expenses, including *per diem*, fees and travel, will be borne by the Governments concerned and that only servicing costs at Headquarters will be borne by the United Nations budget. It is assumed that, if only limited conference services are required and meetings are scheduled within the over-all conference programme, the costs of servicing the group at Headquarters can be met without additional appropriation being requested.

##### Transport of dangerous goods

2. The effect of resolution 8 of the present report would be to set up a permanent committee of not more

than nine experts from countries interested in the international transport of dangerous goods, which would meet at infrequent intervals for the purposes outlined in paragraph 4, sub-paragraph (a) of the resolution. The committee would report progress to the Transport and Communications Commission. It would be assisted initially by the preparation of a comparative study of systems of regulations on packing. The resolution further recommends that the Secretary-General should invite Governments of countries interested to make experts available, at his request, to serve on the committee, and further recommends that the Secretary-General be authorized to cover some or all of the expense involved out of the regular budget of the United Nations if it is found that this expense can be covered under budgetary appropriations.

3. The Secretary-General assumes that the committee would meet in 1958 at Geneva for a period of not more than twenty-one days and that the consultant could begin his work at the end of 1957 and be able to complete it within a period of three months. While it has not been possible to consult the Geneva office on conference service requirements, it is believed that temporary assistance funds, possibly in the amount of about \$7,000, would be required, depending upon the time of scheduling.

4. On the basis of these assumptions, the financial implications of the resolution would be as follows:

<u>(a) Committee of Experts (1958)</u>	<u>U.S.</u> <u>dollars</u>
(i) Travel and subsistence of members (at an average cost of \$1,000 each, with subsistence for 9 experts at \$20 each per day for 21 days).....	12,780
(ii) Travel and subsistence for one Headquarters' staff member.....	1,150
(iii) Allowance for additional temporary assistance at Geneva office.....	<u>7,000</u>
	20,930
 <u>(b) Consultant (1957-1958)</u>	
Lump sum provision (for approximately three months' work).....	<u>3,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>23,930</u>

5. If this project is approved by the Economic and Social Council for implementation in 1958, it is expected that the expenses for one short-term consultant could be absorbed in the regular appropriations. As to the financing of the proposed committee, however, the Secretary-General believes that uncertainty as to the availability of funds for that purpose would be undesirable, particularly since the committee would be constituted as a regular United Nations body. Hence the Secretary-General would propose to take the 1958 requirements for such a committee fully into account when he submits eventual revisions of the 1958 budget estimates to the twelfth session of the General Assembly.

6. The periodicity of subsequent meetings is not known, but all costs of the committee in years after 1958 would be provided for in the regular budget estimates for the year concerned.