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President: Mr. A. PATIÑO (Colombia)

Present:

Representatives of the following States: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

Observers for the following Member States: Algeria, Belgium, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Hungary, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Observers for the following non-member States: Federal Republic of Germany, Holy See, Switzerland.

Representatives of the following specialized agencies: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Health Organization, International Telecommunication Union.

The representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Reports of the regional economic commissions (E/3727/Rev.1, E/3735, E/3759 and annex, E/3764, E/3766/Rev.2, E/3786, E/3798) (*continued*)

1. Mr. DIOP (Senegal) congratulated the Executive Secretary of ECA and his staff on their indefatigable efforts to promote Africa's economic and social development. Without such development, the independence of the African countries could not be preserved. He welcomed the establishment of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, which was to be inaugurated at Dakar on 1 November 1963; thanks were due particularly to the Special Fund, whose support would enable the institute to operate during the first five years. The African states would certainly provide whatever additional support was required, and the institute's teachers

and students would be warmly welcomed by the Senegalese Government and people.

2. His government was impatiently awaiting the follow-up to the preliminary investigations relating to the development of the river Senegal, the river Niger and lake Chad. The development of those waters would have economic and social effects in Africa comparable to those of the development of the Mekong river in South-east Asia. Other most welcome schemes were the preparation of the African trade fair and the establishment of the African development bank. His delegation agreed with the Executive Secretary of ECA that a pragmatic approach should be adopted during the early stages and that Africa's development should proceed at first on a sub-regional basis. That was in line with the view expressed at the recent Summit Conference of Independent African States at Addis Ababa that the first objective must be technical, economic and social advancement, on the basis of which political advances could be achieved later on.

3. In connexion with another problem which was causing concern in Africa, he would appeal to all Members of the United Nations, and in particular the members of the Economic and Social Council, to adopt a firm attitude towards South Africa and Portugal. The tyrannical and degrading policy of apartheid represented a challenge to human rights. It was true that a South African Minister for Foreign Affairs might still claim that the material condition of South Africa's indigenous population was better than that of the citizens of the continent's independent countries; but man did not live by bread alone, and his dignity was more important than his material welfare. Despite all the resolutions adopted in the United Nations during the past ten years, South Africa was stubbornly pursuing a policy doomed to failure.

4. At the same time, Portugal was pursuing its policy of genocide in Angola, Mozambique and other territories. Atrocities without number had been committed in those territories; quite recently Africans had been foully murdered because they had ventured to address a petition to the authorities, and opponents of the regime left the concentration camps only to be sent to mental hospitals. There, too, although the Portuguese colonial empire was irretrievably doomed, the policy was being continued. That state of affairs was also a threat to peace, and in that connexion it was sufficient to recall the case of India, which, in face of Portuguese obstinacy in Goa, had found itself compelled to abandon the principle of non-violence, a principle which it had elevated to the level of a national mystique.

5. In view of that situation, the Senegalese Government was asking, as in the previous year, for the exclusion of Portugal and South Africa from ECA, and was accordingly supporting resolution 68 (V) contained in part III of the report of ECA to the Economic and Social Council (E/3727/Rev.1).

6. Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America), after paying a tribute to the outstanding leadership and intellectual independence of the Executive Secretary of ECLA, said that the tenth session of that commission had been remarkable for the frankness and realism with which the problems of development had been discussed. The main focus of the session had been on the question of what the Latin American countries themselves could do to advance their own economic and social development. In his opening statement to the session, the Executive Secretary had emphasized the need for fiscal and social reforms and the importance of proceeding more rapidly with regional economic integration. References to the Alliance for Progress had been frequent and showed a clear understanding that its success would depend on the effectiveness of the work done by all partners in the enterprise. A number of constructive resolutions had been adopted and the United States delegation had been glad to support all of them, particularly resolution 228 (X). Outstanding among the many productive activities of ECLA was its co-operation with other international organs such as the United Nations Centre for Industrial Development, the Inter-American Development Bank and OAS.

7. The secretariat of ECE deserved commendation for the continued high quality of its economic and statistical reports. Although the chapters distributed before the Commission's eighteenth session were excellent, he hoped that the ECE secretariat would be able, from 1964 onwards, to resume the timely publication of the whole *Economic Survey of Europe* so that it would be distributed as a unit six weeks before the plenary session. Although the atmosphere of the eighteenth session had unfortunately been spoiled by the introduction of extraneous political arguments, some progress had been made. Particularly gratifying had been the adoption of resolution 4 (XVIII) (E/3759, p. 64) on the establishment of an *ad hoc* group to study the problems of east-west trade. The United States delegation had played a major role in elaborating that resolution and considered that the problem of east-west trade could be handled much better within ECE than, for example, within the forthcoming Conference on Trade and Development. His government hoped that a meaningful and useful preliminary report on the subject of east-west trade would be submitted to the forthcoming session of the ECE Committee on the Development of Trade.

8. Since the majority of its members were economically advanced countries, ECE was not concerned as extensively as the other regional economic commissions with the basic problems of development. At the same time, ECE was the oldest economic commission, with an experienced secretariat and an extensive and highly developed programme of work. Consequently, it was a necessary and difficult task to keep an appropriate

balance between the level of activity of ECE and that of the other commissions. Unfortunately, no positive action had been taken at the eighteenth session to reduce the number of technological meetings organized by ECE and thus implement Council resolution 936 (XXXV). His delegation looked forward with considerable interest to the report that the Executive Secretary of ECE was to submit to the nineteenth session on that subject. It should be made clear that his delegation had no intention of weakening the Commission, but merely sought the elimination of minor, marginal or obsolete activities.

9. The United States delegation fully supported the work programme and priorities contained in the annual report of ECAFE (E/3735) and approved of the Commission's recommendation that Western Samoa should become a member of the Commission and that Western Samoa, continental Australia and New Zealand should be included in the geographical scope of ECAFE (*ibid.*, paras. 405-407). In commending the work of the Commission, he wished to stress in particular the work of the Seminar on the Development of Basic Chemical and Allied Industries (*ibid.*, paras. 26-34), the *ad hoc* Committee on an Asian Institute of Economic Development (*ibid.*, paras. 113-115) and the continuing activities of the Committee for Co-ordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin (*ibid.*, paras. 134-151). The work of the latter committee was an outstanding illustration of sub-regional co-operation. He also wished to commend the Executive Secretary of ECAFE for the excellent *Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East in 1962*.¹

10. Developments in Africa deserved special consideration, for the second half of the twentieth century would go down in history as the age of African liberation. The Government and people of the United States had strongly supported the moves towards independence on the African continent, but were keenly aware that political independence must be buttressed by economic growth and social well-being. That awareness had been clearly brought out by the United States observer at the fifth session of ECA, held in Leopoldville. The work of the ECA secretariat had been remarkable, and the performance of the Commission at its fifth session impressive. There was every indication that the Commission had come of age. The progress made towards the establishment of an African Institute for Development and Planning (E/3727/Rev.1, paras. 123-127) had been gratifying. His government welcomed resolutions 71 (V) and 72 (V) adopted on that subject and would lend the project its strong support when it came before the Governing Council of the Special Fund. The United States was also prepared to consider providing fellowships to assist selected students to receive training at the Institute at the request of the countries concerned. It was also warmly sympathetic to the objectives of the proposed African development bank and impressed with the progress made towards the setting up of that institution (*ibid.*, paras. 20-32). The Commission had also adopted a number of other important resolutions on such topics as social welfare (88 (V)), education (82 (VI)), development planning

¹ United Nations publication, sales No.: 63.II.F.1.

(72 (V)) and public administration (70 (V)). His delegation trusted that the ECA secretariat would be prepared to take full advantage of the Headquarters staff in its work in those fields. Finally, his government was keenly aware of the need to ensure more adequate representation of Africa in the Economic and Social Council. The best way of achieving that aim would be to enlarge the Council through an amendment to the Charter of the United Nations. He was sure that there would be overwhelming support for such a move in the General Assembly.

11. The regional economic commissions had certain special qualifications which enabled them to perform a unique and invaluable function within the United Nations family. That was why the General Assembly in its resolution 1823 (XVII) and in other resolutions had rightly pressed for a greater degree of decentralization. But there were certain natural limits to that process. For example, the regional commissions should never be expected to develop the same kind of profound and diversified expertise as the specialized agencies or the United Nations itself. It was perfectly clear that the resident representatives must continue to be primarily responsible to Headquarters. Also, the basic policies for United Nations programmes must be set by the Council and the Assembly, a process which could not be decentralized. The various programmes were intended for the benefit of all developing countries, and an integrated and uniform administration of the programmes was thus essential. Policies should not differ from one region to another, nor should one region be favoured over another. The partnership between donors and recipients could find its expression only at Headquarters and in the specialized agencies, since many of the net donor countries were not fully represented in the various regional commissions.

12. The report by the Secretary-General on decentralization (E/3786) showed that there had been a very considerable increase in the functions performed at the regional level and that the peculiar capacities of the regional commissions were particularly useful in the development and administration of regional projects. With reference to paragraph 26 of the report, it should be made clear that the measures in question were being taken solely with respect to regional projects. With reference to paragraph 22 of the report on the meeting of the executive secretaries (E/3798), he hoped it was clearly understood that the assistance in question should be made available only at the request of individual countries, that any approval of country programmes remained the exclusive right of the countries themselves, and that requests for assistance in the implementation of programmes and projects were acted upon, in the case of voluntary programmes, by the central authorities of those programmes. Even in the case of regional projects, final approval should not be decentralized. In the case of the regular programmes, approval of regional projects should rest with Headquarters and with the Council. In the case of regional projects financed by EPTA and the Special Fund, final approval must continue to rest with TAB and TAC, on the one hand, and with the Governing Council of the Special Fund, on the other.

13. Finally, his delegation would like clarification of paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report (E/3786)

and, with respect to annexes I and II, would welcome a clearer definition of "regional advisers" and "regional projects". His delegation also hoped that any draft resolution on the subject of decentralization would be referred to the Co-ordination Committee of the Council rather than dealt with in plenary meeting.

14. Mr. NEHRU (India) said that in spite of the progress of decolonization the gap between the developed and the less developed nations of the world — the rich and the poor — had not yet closed and in many ways had widened. His delegation was of the opinion that the best way to close that gap was international co-operation in the process of development; for that reason, it supported and welcomed the work that was being done by the various international agencies, including the regional economic commissions.

15. The decision to hold a United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 1964 had resulted in the assignment of new responsibilities to the commissions and he was glad to note that the latter had already given valuable assistance to the preparatory committee of the conference.

16. With regard to the work of the commissions during the past year, he was glad to note that ECA, in spite of some initial difficulties in the organization of its secretariat, had concerned itself with a wide range of matters relating to economic and social development. He had been particularly impressed by the measures taken to extend advisory services to the African countries in the preparation of technical assistance programmes. A significant development in Africa was that while some countries were associated with EEC, others were not, so that there was some danger that regional co-operation and healthy economic and other relations among the developing countries might be weakened. The secretariat of ECA, he was glad to note, was carrying out some special studies on that problem. The proposed study on trade between Africa and Asia would be of great interest to the developing countries, and it was desirable that the study should be completed as early as possible so that any proposals that might be put forward could receive full consideration before the opening of the conference on trade and development.

17. He was glad to note that ECLA had paid special attention to the vital role of trade in the process of economic development. It was generally recognized in that region that economic integration could play an important role as a dynamic factor in speeding up the rate of investment in the developing countries. The Commission had also considered the need for developed countries not only to remove the obstacles to trade, but also to take positive measures to promote imports from the developing countries. The important problem of improving the terms of trade for producers of primary commodities had also received the Commission's attention. He was pleased to note that the Latin American governments attached great importance to the forthcoming conference on trade and development and that the Commission's secretariat had been asked to give first priority to the work of the conference (E/3766/Rev.2, paras.397-399). A seminar on

the conference was being organized, and it should be of interest to the developing countries of other regions also.

18. The work of ECE was of particular interest to the developing countries, since the members of that commission were highly developed countries and their policies had an important impact on the developing countries of other regions. The Commission numbered among its members countries with different economic and social systems; it therefore bore a special responsibility for bringing about a reduction of economic disparities, as well as for bridging the gulf between east and west. Some of the Commission's activities were particularly interesting to countries such as his own; one example was the work of the Steel Committee on the economic aspects of iron ore preparation, since India was a major exporter of iron ore. The work of the Committee on the Development of Trade was of special significance to the developing countries outside the region; in his opinion, that committee should increase its contacts and work jointly with the trade committees of other regional commissions. The ECE could also make a real contribution in the field of technical assistance, where there was a real need for a long-term programme of co-operation between the Commission and the other regional economic commissions. It would be helpful if studies could be made of the existing situation and future outlook with regard to exports of manufactures and semi-manufactures to the European countries from the developing countries of other regions.

19. As to ECAFE, his government was a member of that commission and was taking part in all its activities. The region covered by the Commission was one of the poorest in the world and at the same time the most heavily populated, so that its work was of special importance. Agriculture was the dominant activity in that region, and the need for diversification of the economies of the member countries had been rightly stressed. That accounted for the importance of the work of the Committee on Industry and Natural Resources, which had dealt with such matters as the preparation of industrial feasibility surveys, the co-ordination of industrial development plans, programmes of training in industries and the like. Another important activity of the Commission was the development of water resources. Social development had not been neglected, and attention had also been paid to such matters as inland transport and communications, tourism, international travel, telecommunications and, above all, the organization of planning and research. He congratulated the Commission on the interest it had taken in the establishment of the Asian Institute for Economic Development and Planning, which would be of great assistance to member countries in the formulation of their development plans.

20. With regard to the important question of regional economic co-operation, he was glad to note that some progress had been made at the last ECAFE session at Manila, where there had been complete agreement on the need for closer regional economic co-operation. That represented an important advance, but since the region consisted of countries in varying stages of development, there were difficulties in the way. Neither a customs union nor a free trade area might prove to be practicable

for that region in the near future; on the other hand, a sector approach, aimed at weaving the resources of one country into the requirements of its neighbours, might more easily initiate a really effective movement for regional economic co-operation.

21. Concerning future work programmes and priorities, his delegation had examined the reports of the regional economic commissions and was glad to state that it could fully support the proposals in them.

22. With regard to the question of decentralization, he approved of the pragmatic approach taken in the Secretary-General's report and agreed that some decentralization of the economic and social activities of the United Nations was necessary in order to strengthen the commissions. In the case of projects for which the regional secretariats possessed the required facilities, a larger delegation of authority could take place, while Headquarters should play a bigger part in projects requiring the mobilization of resources from outside the region. In such cases also, headquarters control should be combined with as much consultation with, and association of, the regional secretariats as possible. His delegation therefore hoped that the policy of decentralization and strengthening of the commissions would be continued. In the field of financial and technical assistance, however, it was necessary to keep in sight the basic objective of speedy and prompt assistance and to make sure that the association of the commissions, wherever that was necessary, did not have the effect of delaying assistance to recipients. If the process of decentralization was to progress further, serious thought must clearly be given to increasing the staff of the regional secretariats and to making maximum use of the existing staff.

23. With regard to the composition of the commissions, his delegation warmly welcomed the ECAFE proposal that Australia and New Zealand should be included in the geographical scope of ECAFE and that Western Samoa should be included in the geographical scope of ECAFE and admitted to membership of the Commission. His delegation fully supported the proposal of ECA in resolution 68 (V) for the termination of the membership of Portugal and South Africa, while with regard to the proposal relating to the change in status of France, Spain and the United Kingdom from full membership to associate membership (69 (V)), his delegation's position was that it recognized the contribution made by France and the United Kingdom to the process of decolonization in Africa, but it also recognized that the membership of a regional commission was of primary importance to the independent countries of that region; and consequently, if the vast majority of the independent countries had strong views on the question of membership, their views should be respected. Lastly, his delegation supported the proposal that Africa, as well as other regions consisting largely of developing countries, should have greater representation in the Council on the basis of equitable geographic distribution.

24. Mr. DUPRAZ (France) said that his delegation would for the time being confine itself to stating its views on the activities of the regional economic commissions,

but might wish to speak later on certain draft resolutions submitted by the commissions.

25. In signing the San Francisco Charter, the United Nations had set itself the task of promoting international co-operation with a view to establishing peaceful and friendly relations among peoples. In order to further the accomplishment of that task, the Economic and Social Council had had recourse to certain specialized agencies and to regional economic commissions which were to reflect regional situations. The spirit in which those commissions had been set up should therefore be constantly kept in mind, and the attachment which their founders had displayed to the principles of universality, of realism, and of co-operation and efficiency should be emulated. When it had established the regional economic commissions, the Council had not intended them to isolate themselves in a continental frame of mind which might reproduce an enlarged nationalism. It had intended those bodies to supply full information on the condition and hopes of each region. The regional commissions must not only express their views and take action, but also facilitate the constant adjustment required at regional level of guide-lines adopted in a more general context. It was for the Council to play a directing role in guiding, providing motive power and codifying. In order to discharge that task, the regional commissions had had to set up committees whose proven effectiveness was due to the fact that they had not tried to loosen the ties that bound them to the executive secretariats, which were themselves concerned with the same discipline vis-à-vis the Headquarters Secretariat. Similarly, the regional commissions must not sever the ties linking them to the Council. They must comply with their terms of reference and, more particularly, must not systematically transform themselves into managerial bodies, since that would conflict with the principle of the division of labour and impede the settlement of the problems whose consideration was reserved for the Council.

26. Although in favour of a strengthening of the activity of the regional commissions, his delegation therefore desired the measures to be adopted for that purpose to be defined in consultation with the competent organs of the United Nations, in order to avoid duplication and perhaps even certain fractional activities.

27. In his statement at the 1265th meeting, the Executive Secretary of ECE had emphasized precisely the subsidiary character of the body he directed. That commission had always been careful to define its role in accordance with its terms of reference and with the spirit of the Charter itself. The Commission had had its difficult beginnings in a war-torn Europe, but it had enabled two groups of countries with different political, economic and social systems to adopt methods of work which had facilitated contacts and occasionally some measure of understanding. The Commission had not forgotten that questions representing a tangible common interest had to be selected, and it had provided a forum for the confrontation of diverse interests, even of interests outside the region. That realism had increased the value of its work, just as ECLA and ECAFE had enhanced the value of their debates by adopting a similar attitude. The ECE

was aware of its responsibilities towards less developed regions. It was now in a position to tackle any tasks of co-operation that the future might have in store.

28. The ECAFE would soon be reaching the stage when it could profit from its experience and reap the benefit of its co-operative and humanist attitude. Much of the credit for that would be due to its Executive Secretary. There had been some grounds for anxiety that political considerations might prevent ECAFE from observing the principle of unanimity; but wisdom had prevailed and, in 1963 as in 1962, fresh impetus had been given to a number of important regional projects. The Asian Institute for Economic Development and Planning was to open in Bangkok in January 1964. Work was soon to start on the construction of the Asian Highway; and a second five-year programme for the development of the Lower Mekong Basin had been approved in principle. Mention should also be made of the opening of the training centre in customs administration and the establishment of a railway research committee. But the greatest contribution which the Executive Secretary had made had been to resuscitate the idea of regional economic co-operation. The plan for an Asian common market had never taken shape, but it had been replaced by the more modest realization of the need to increase intraregional trade, largely by opening local markets more widely to the products of young industries in the region. In that connexion, great importance should be attached to the decision to hold a conference of high-level representatives of states in the ECAFE region at Bangkok in September 1963, to discuss and adopt more specific measures to promote concerted regional action. The prestige of ECAFE as a regional body was high owing to the wisdom and realistic spirit displayed by the Asian States in their consciousness of their solidarity. Another sign of their maturity had been the decision to admit new members to the Commission. The success of ECAFE was also that of its Executive Secretary, who had succeeded in strengthening the secretariat and recruiting particularly competent specialists to assist him.

29. Piecemeal efforts could thus be transformed into fruitful action by men with the right qualities; and that was also true of the of ECLA, whose achievements were indistinguishable from its Executive Secretary. It was to be hoped that the efforts which he had made to develop the resources of Latin America would not be in vain. The appointment of Mr. Mayobre as the new Executive Secretary gave high promise for the future. With Latin America in the throes of economic reorganization, it had seemed that at the tenth session of ECLA at Mar del Plata the member countries had been in some doubt as to the direction which the Commission's work should take in future. In the past, the main role of the Commission had been to provide the necessary inspiration to co-operate. Some of its work had since been taken over by other bodies, and the next step was to see how ECLA could best place its experience at their disposal. Particular mention should be made of the work to be done by the Latin-American Institute for Economic and Social Planning, which was the natural accompaniment of an already active Latin-American Common Market. Regional planning was one particular field in which ECLA

could once again provide encouragement and advice. The statement which the Executive Secretary of ECLA had made to the Council was not the first occasion on which he had issued a sort of warning to the world in highly authoritative terms; and the world would be ill-advised to disregard that warning.

30. With regard to the work of ECLA, and supporting the proposal to enlarge the membership of the Council in order to increase African representation, he wished to congratulate the Executive Secretary on the efforts he had made to identify more clearly the many different problems of African development. France shared the desire of the Executive Secretary of ECLA to build up as efficient as possible an organization to tackle the tasks assigned to it. His delegation was confident that the Executive Secretary would arrange a more equitable geographical distribution of posts in the secretariat amongst member States. His delegation also welcomed the positive character of some of the resolutions adopted at the Commission's fifth session, particularly resolution 72 (V), which set the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning at Dakar on the path of practical achievement; and it had already stated at the fifth session and had since confirmed that France was prepared contribute to its work by providing in particular teachers and specialists. It was to be hoped that it would be established on a basis similar to that of other institutes for higher economic studies which were already being set up in considerable numbers in Africa. He hoped that the Dakar institute would avoid giving purely academic instruction,

and try to produce practical specialists in development who would be able to assist their young home countries as quickly as possible.

31. Each commission deserved credit for the quality of its documents, and for its integration in the United Nations in accordance with its own needs and its terms of reference. Whether an institution developed or withered away depended on the degree of general mutual interest and whether or not it displayed a spirit of regional and interregional co-operation.

32. He would congratulate the Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs on the work he had done and would thank him for it. The French delegation wished to stress its interest in the establishment of regional development institutes. Facing the need to train men fit for the immense national tasks they had to undertake, the institutes would also seek new solutions to the difficult problems of under-development. The men of quality who would have passed through them would not only be conscious of the efforts they would have to make on behalf of millions of men to whom they owed their advancement, but would also know the paths they should follow, the help upon which they could rely and the meaning they should give to their actions. They would also bear their share of responsibility in the future and to a certain extent, of the success of the common task in ensuring the peace and well-being of mankind.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.