



**CONTENTS**

Agenda item 14:	<i>Page</i>
Reports of the regional economic commissions and of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut ( <i>continued</i> ) . . . . .	97

*President:* Mr. PÉREZ GUERRERO (Venezuela).

**AGENDA ITEM 14**

**Reports of the regional economic commissions and of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut (E/4491, E/4493, E/4497, E/4498, E/4499, E/4560 and Corr.1; E/L.1218 and Rev.1, E/L.1219, E/L.1221) (*continued*)**

1. Mr. NAYERI (Iran) said he had been interested in the statements of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions and that of the Director of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut. His delegation was particularly impressed with the achievements of ECAFE and wished to pay a tribute to its Executive Secretary, U Nyun, whose ability and dynamism had contributed greatly to the success of those efforts. The reason for establishing the regional economic commissions—to speed up development through collective effort—remained valid. Iran had always approved of ECAFE's work and of the order or priorities adopted for its plans and projects. His delegation therefore supported the resolutions contained in the report.
2. As ECAFE's Executive Secretary had said, the countries in the region had achieved a growth rate of 8 per cent over the past two years, a fact which justified great hopes for the future. The ECAFE report showed that the Commission had adopted a wise, realistic approach to the problems facing member countries and indeed all developing countries. For example, to overcome the main obstacle to the development of those countries—the constant deterioration in their terms of trade—ECAFE had established a trade promotion centre. Another proof of ECAFE's realism was the Asian Institute for Economic Development and Planning, which sought practical solutions to the problems of development planning in the region.
3. Also in the training sector, but in a different field, UNITAR had organized courses for diplomats from developing countries. He thought, nevertheless, that it would be better to concentrate training efforts on economic development.
4. He informed the Council that the first sector (Turkish frontier - Teheran) of the priority route linking the Turkish-Iranian frontier with Singapore had just been opened to traffic. That achievement was Iran's modest contribution to the creation of a communication network

which would permit better understanding between the countries and peoples of the region. He also reminded the Council's members that the second Asian International Trade Fair would be held at Teheran from 5 to 24 October 1969, and invited Member countries of the United Nations to participate in that international event.

5. His delegation was generally in agreement with the draft resolution submitted by Sweden (E/L.1218). However, he shared the view of those delegations which felt that the draft should first be submitted to the Co-ordination Committee.

6. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) regretted that there was insufficient time for a thorough study of the problems in the areas served by the regional economic commissions. The reports of those commissions gave a clear picture of the situation in their respective continents. His delegation had been apprehensive about the co-ordination of the work of the individual regional economic commissions, but had been reassured by the positive results of the meetings of the executive secretaries. The regional economic commissions were among the most valuable institutions created by the United Nations. They had successfully followed a policy of decentralization, which had resulted in the convening of many meetings away from their headquarters, and had tried to co-ordinate their activities with those of other United Nations bodies and institutions. The report of the United Nations Economic and Social Office at Beirut indicated the complexity of the problems in a region where relations between neighbouring countries presented difficulties.

7. Referring to the report of ECA (E/4497), he commended the Executive Secretary of ECA on his statement (1544th meeting) and said that the Commission had a heavy responsibility in view of the difficult problems in Africa. The views expressed in ECA's report concerning the problems of development in Africa and the second Development Decade coincided with those of his delegation. Although it had been in existence for only ten years, ECA had no cause to envy the achievements of the older economic commissions; it had worked out a system of regional decentralization, created permanent intergovernmental machinery and promoted economic co-operation between the various sub-regions; it had given its attention to development planning; it had placed special emphasis on the development and modernization of agriculture and had shown initiative in many other fields. It should continue its efforts to encourage co-operation between the new African States, whose number had increased from eight to thirty-nine in ten years.

8. His delegation wished to be included among the sponsors of the draft resolution and agreed with the amendments proposed.

9. Miss HARELI (Observer for Israel), speaking under rule 75 of the rules of procedure, pointed out that the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut was run by the Headquarters Secretariat and could not therefore be compared with the secretariat of a regional economic commission as it was not controlled by a regional intergovernmental body. The report submitted by that Office reflected the views of the Secretary-General, but not necessarily those of the Governments in the region. It should therefore be considered in the same way as other reports submitted by the Secretary-General. Her Government regretted that there was no regional economic commission for the Middle East, and would be ready at any time to co-operate in the establishment of such a commission. Her Government also believed that the success of any programme of regional co-operation depended on effective collaboration between neighbouring countries, and hoped that such collaboration would become a reality in the Middle East.

10. Mr. EL-BOURI (Libya) commended the secretariats of the regional economic commissions and of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut on their untiring efforts. On the eve of the second Development Decade, in the light of the experience gained in the first Development Decade, it was important to reaffirm the principle of decentralization, which would give the regional economic commissions greater freedom of action, but fuller co-ordination between the commissions and the specialized agencies was also necessary. His delegation was glad to learn that the regional commissions now had the necessary resources and that they would play an important part in the second Development Decade. In view of the diversity of the regions, it was natural that each commission should have a different order of priorities.

11. In the case of Africa, the Executive Secretary of ECA had clearly indicated the nature of the economic and social difficulties facing African countries. He had emphasized the importance of agriculture to development in Africa and the need to modernize the patterns and methods of agriculture while promoting the establishment of small industries. The recent establishment of the sub-regional small-scale industry advisory centre at Niamey had been an excellent move in that direction. His delegation welcomed the efforts to promote economic co-operation between the sub-regions of Africa, and the establishment of permanent inter-governmental machinery for that purpose. The creation of two economic communities, for West and East Africa respectively, and the assistance given to the bodies established in North Africa showed that ECA was pursuing a practical policy geared to the continent's needs. It was also worth noting the services rendered by ECA to the Maghreb Standing Consultative Committee, at whose request it had undertaken various studies and was collecting data of sub-regional interest. Countries which had recently attained independence were most in need of United Nations assistance and most of those countries were in Africa. ECA should therefore be helped in every way to enable it to speed up the continent's economic and social development and to overcome the immense difficulties facing it.

12. Libya would support the draft resolution.

13. Mr. BENLER (Turkey) thanked the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions for their reports on the work of the commissions, which was mainly concerned with furthering co-operation between the countries belonging to a given region. His delegation also welcomed the concern of the executive secretaries with co-ordinating their respective activities.

14. As a member of ECE, his Government was happy to see Mr. Stanovnik at the helm of that Commission. Mr. Stanovnik had given an extremely lucid analysis of ECE activities. The Turkish delegation agreed with him, particularly with respect to the constructive work of the Commission's last session, which would make it possible to expand East-West relations and develop the economies of ECE member countries through intensified economic and commercial co-operation, the beneficial effects of which would extend to other countries. His Government welcomed the fact that ECE intended to give more attention to the problems of the economically less developed European countries. It was a common characteristic of all those countries that they were at the "take-off" stage of their economic development. Consequently, should ECE increase its activities on their behalf, there would be resulting benefits not only for those countries but also for others of the same economic level in other regions.

15. He welcomed the draft resolution, and had no objection to it being passed to the Co-ordination Committee for more thorough examination.

16. Mr. KRALIK (Czechoslovakia) said it was difficult to be satisfied with past achievements of the regional economic commissions since the tasks which had accumulated and the urgent need to undertake new projects on the international level still required an immense co-operative effort. As a member country of ECE, Czechoslovakia wished to make a few suggestions concerning the future direction of that Commission's work. It should, above all, concern itself with encouraging co-operation between all the countries of Europe, developing international and regional co-operation in the fields of science and technology, the joint utilization of natural and energy resources, the establishment of a regional infrastructure and the development of international trade. Those ideas had, incidentally, been included in a memorandum which his delegation had submitted to ECE a few years previously. The development of East-West trade, industrial co-operation and scientific and technological co-operation were, of course, very important but were not the most significant aspect of the Commission's work. Once a certain level of international co-operation had been achieved, it would become necessary to forge a closer link between the specialized activities of the Commission and the work of the specialized agencies, probably along the lines indicated by the FAO secretariat and on the pattern of the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his statement. It must be recognized that the regional bodies did an indispensable job of planning the economic development of the regions as separate production and consumption entities. That work required statistical data, national development planning, improved

methods of economic planning and programming, scientific policies at the national level, etc. So far, those conditions only existed in the industrially advanced countries so that it was quite understandable that ECE, which dealt with the most advanced region of the world from the economic and technological standpoint, should have made more progress in that direction than any other regional commission. The favoured position of ECE was also, perhaps, due to the fact that, with respect to food, education and industrialization, Europe was no longer hampered by the difficulties facing the former colonial regions and young States of the Third World.

17. The scientific and technological revolution, which had now begun in Europe, could help considerably to speed up economic development in other continents. The Commission was already co-operating closely with ECAFE, ECLA and ECE; in particular, it had, in conjunction with their secretariats, carried out studies on the world market for iron ore, market trends for chemical products in developing countries, and so on. As for trade, ECE had been co-operating with the other regional commissions since the beginning of the decade—it was well-known what part it had played in preparing for the first session of UNCTAD and the international symposium on industrial development which had taken place at Athens in 1967.

18. The importance of the human factor in development, which the Secretary-General had stressed, was in the first rank of ECE's current concerns. It was vitally necessary for the developing countries to have adequate numbers of scientific and technical staff; accordingly, the ECE secretariat was actively engaged in placing technical assistance fellows in the countries of the region and in training fellows within the framework of UNDP projects: programmes of that kind, involving about 100 fellows, had been organized for 53 projects relating to 35 countries in all the developing regions.

19. The scientific and technological revolution required that nations should pool their efforts within the framework of international projects of ever-increasing size, and combine their intellectual and financial resources. In fields such as power, the exploitation of raw materials, and agricultural research, co-operation of that kind was becoming increasingly necessary, regardless of differences in economic and political systems. He hoped, therefore, that the Council's discussions on that agenda item would result in new measures to intensify the activities of all the regional commissions and strengthen their co-operation.

20. In view of the need for international co-operation, it was regrettable that the German Democratic Republic was still unable to participate, as of right, in the work of ECE.

21. Mr. CLAMOUNGOU (Chad) said he was grateful to the Executive Secretary of ECA for the clarity with which he had explained the problems encountered in Africa. The Executive Secretary had made a number of constructive proposals to solve those problems and it was to be hoped that his comments on agricultural production, in particular, would be given careful attention by Governments.

22. Regional action was undoubtedly the best method available to the countries of Africa, but a proliferation of organizations which could harm the effectiveness of such action during the second Decade should be avoided. With respect to the second Decade, he agreed with the representative of Upper Volta that a limited number of precise objectives should be defined to ensure the sound growth of the embryonic African economies.

23. It was regrettable that the ECA report did not devote sufficient attention to the efforts made in the least developed part of the continent, Central Africa. Reference should be made to the establishment of the Chad Basin Commission, involving four riparian States, and of the Central African Customs and Economic Union, an organization which was both economic and political. It was also to be hoped that ECA would give greater attention to the problems of the countries in that sub-region.

24. Moreover, in Africa, a continent in which technicians were seriously lacking, United Nations experts could play an active part and, rather than contenting themselves with a simple liaison role, should co-operate closely with Governments.

25. His delegation wished to co-sponsor the revised draft resolution submitted by Sweden, Upper Volta and Venezuela, containing the amendments accepted by Sweden, which had just been distributed (E/L.1218/Rev.1). His delegation had no objection to that text being referred to the Co-ordination Committee if that might improve it and hoped that, in its final form, it would be approved unanimously.

26. Mr. DARON (Belgium) said that to strengthen the regional economic commissions, as the Council desired, was in keeping with the current need for decentralization which, in his opinion, should first of all be carried out at the geographic level. ECLA, ECAFE and ECA, whose activities were closely followed by his country in fields such as trade, industry and, in particular, regional and sub-regional integration, already played an indispensable part in the study of the problems which arose in their respective continents. It was impossible, therefore, not to agree with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs (1545th meeting) that they should be the centres of new initiative.

27. As for ECE, it played a vital part in improving relationships between the countries of Europe. Like the Executive Secretary of that Commission, his country viewed the future with optimism; the new trends and working methods adopted in 1967 had given ECE new vitality which was reflected in the important decisions taken at its twenty-third session, particularly in matters of trade, industrial co-operation, and science and technology. Moreover, ECE had taken a major initiative in deciding to review the organization of its sessions and the priorities of its work programme in a manner consonant with Council resolution 1264 (XLIII) of 3 August 1967. He hoped that, under the guidance of the new Executive Secretary, Mr. Stanovnik, development would be strengthened and co-operation with the other regional economic commissions would continue to grow.



28. He thanked the Swedish delegation for having accepted the amendments his delegation had proposed to draft resolution E/L.1218.

29. Mr. LAMARTINE YATES (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that co-operation between FAO and the regional economic commissions, which had been the subject of favourable comments by the executive secretaries and some delegations, would be strengthened even further. In his statement to the Council (1532nd meeting), the Director-General of FAO had announced a plan to make the executive secretaries of the commissions the resident representatives of the Organization; they would receive their instructions in agricultural matters from the Director-General and the services in the commission secretariats responsible for agricultural questions would be strengthened so as to become instruments for the work of FAO. An agreement to that effect would make the activities of both parties more effective. The executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions, had favourably received that FAO plan, as could be seen from paragraph 9 of the report of their meetings held in 1968 (E/4560).

30. With respect to the United Nations Export Promotion Programme, he said that FAO had also made an important effort in the sphere of trade. It had established profitable links with the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre and would give every possible support to the regional centres once they had been established. It was paradoxical that such a broad question as export promotion should be considered under agenda item 14, relating to the regional economic commissions.

31. He hoped that the Swedish draft resolution, once it had been given its final form, would enable FAO to continue in favourable circumstances the fruitful efforts it had already begun in the field of trade.

32. Mr. BHANDARI (India) commended Mr. Stanovnik on the new impetus he had given to ECE. That Commission represented the majority of developed countries and could exert a decisive influence on the expansion of the trade of developing countries and of their external resources.

33. Within their regions, the regional economic commissions now played such an important part that the question of decentralization was no longer even a matter of discussion in the United Nations. ECLA and ECA had already made significant progress in regional and sub-regional co-operation, and favourable prospects in that direction were already opening up for ECAFE. India was playing a particularly active part in the latter Commission: it had contributed funds and studies for the development of the lower Mekong basin and had made the third largest contribution to the Asian Development Bank. In general, India acted to a large extent as a donor country by placing training institutes, experts, studies, etc., at the disposal of neighbour countries.

34. Still more effective work by ECAFE would require, at the external level, an increased flow of funds from the developed countries and the necessary additional staff

from the United Nations. As the end of the war which was ravaging South-East Asia would greatly facilitate ECAFE's work and the development of the region, it was to be hoped that the negotiations in Paris would produce results.

35. India was keenly interested in ECA's efforts in a rich continent which was just awakening. It proved that interest by regularly sending representatives to the annual sessions and conferences of ECA and provided assistance in the small-industry field, where it had acquired considerable experience and where action was specially important in the early stages of development. It was fully prepared to increase that assistance.

36. His delegation was particularly pleased to note the usefulness of the programmes undertaken by ECLA in connexion with the development of the Caribbean area, population questions and regional integration.

37. He believed that the regional economic commissions offered the best means of carrying out a global strategy in the second Development Decade. It was therefore important to try to ensure effective co-ordination of their activities and those of the specialized agencies; that co-operation should not be conceived on the basis of a narrow delimitation of areas of competence, but in terms of the contribution each body could make to the efforts of the others.

38. Referring to the question of the United Nations Export Promotion Programme, he expressed the hope that the regional economic commissions would also be instrumental in developing regional trade and help to strengthen interregional trade relations. He regretted that the reports of the commissions made no mention of the concerted declaration on trade expansion, economic co-operation and regional integration among developing countries adopted at the second session of UNCTAD (resolution 23 (II)); efforts had already been made to implement that declaration at the governmental level and it was desirable for similar action to be taken at the commission level. Also the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre should be enlarged to enable it to give more attention to the study of problems of marketing, personnel training and co-ordination of export efforts. The Executive Secretary of ECAFE had recalled, in that connexion, that the Commission had decided to establish a trade promotion centre, which would complement the work of the UNCTAD/GATT centre by concentrating, in the initial stage, mainly on personnel training.

39. He drew attention to another field which was particularly suited to regional and interregional co-operation, that of industrialization. It would be useful if developing countries which had acquired experience, sometimes bitter experience, in that field would help other countries to avoid the mistakes they themselves had made. India, the United Arab Republic and Yugoslavia had already decided to establish a joint committee to work along those lines. He hoped that the executive secretaries would give that form of co-operation the attention it deserved.

40. Referring to the revised draft resolution, he expressed approval of the objectives stated in it and hoped that the problems of jurisdiction involved would be easily solved.

41. Mr. HASNAOUI (Morocco) paid a tribute to the untiring efforts of the Executive Secretary of ECA to promote the economic and social progress of Africa. The African peoples were more than ever aware of their responsibility and of the dynamic role they had to play in the drive against poverty and ignorance. It was in that spirit that the four Maghreb countries constituting the sub-region of North Africa had established the Maghreb Standing Consultative Committee, which had its headquarters at Tunis and which had the necessary authority and research facilities to enable those countries to undertake concerted action in many different fields. Moreover, ECA's Sub-regional Office at Tangier helped, through research and surveys, to speed up the economic integration of those countries. The co-ordination of the policies of the Maghreb countries had improved in the fields of transport, telecommunications, education, standardization of customs legislation, statistics, population and the marketing of primary commodities, notably alfalfa, for which an inter-Maghreb agency had been established. Assistance from the Libyan Government and the United Nations had recently made it possible to open an industrial institute at Tripoli for training industrial management staff from the Maghreb countries and conducting research and surveys with a view to industrial integration at the North African sub-region level. Furthermore, in order to orient future investment in such a way as to ensure balanced development of the sub-region, the Maghreb countries had undertaken studies of industrial co-ordination with size of market and undertaking as the criterion. Other studies on various aspects of economic development had been carried out under ECA auspices. The establishment of agricultural produce processing industries and multinational sea and air transport companies at the sub-regional level was also envisaged.

42. It was desirable to increase the resources of ECA's secretariat to enable it to meet the needs of African States more effectively, in theoretical as well as practical matters. The sub-regional offices should also be strengthened through the appointment of sufficient numbers of highly qualified experts, who would help Governments to take decisions on the basis of objective information in the light of the special conditions prevailing in each country of the sub-region. Co-operation between the different sub-regions of Africa was of course essential. In that connexion, there was every reason to expect that, under the capable leadership of its Executive Secretary, ECA would adopt an over-all view of African development, as the second Development Decade approached.

43. His delegation would support the revised draft resolution.

44. Mr. AL-MUTAIR (Kuwait) said that four key concepts had emerged from the discussion. The first was that twenty years' experience had proved that decentralization and regionalism were the best guarantees of efficient United Nations action. The second was the inescapable need for close co-operation between the regional economic commissions and the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut, on the one hand, and the specialized agencies and other United Nations

bodies on the other, co-operation that should be encouraged and intensified. The third was that regionalism existed on two levels—the sub-regional and the interregional; the nature of economic, financial, social and human problems varied from country to country within the same region, and regional co-operation should operate first between countries with similar problems; the different regions must then co-operate among themselves to permit exchanges of information and experience, which would always be useful. The fourth was the importance of the innovating and co-ordinating role of the Council, which was the focal point of the activities of all United Nations bodies in the economic and social field.

45. Kuwait was fully convinced of the correctness of those concepts and, refusing to be a mere spectator, had tried to put them into practice since it had begun to participate in international activities. At the regional level, Kuwait had already acted as host to an industrial seminar for Arab countries, where it had made certain recommendations which, after their adoption, it had implemented. An international conference on petrochemical industries would also be held in Kuwait and a guarantee fund for foreign investments in Arab countries had also been established there. Kuwait co-operated with UNDP, and an economic and social planning institute for all the countries of the region had been operating in its territory for the past two years. Kuwait's financial assistance fund granted loans, involving no political conditions, to all neighbouring countries on very favourable terms.

46. It was to be hoped that the will of the peoples of the Middle East would ultimately triumph over the tragic situation which had dominated the area for over a year. That situation was a challenge both for the peoples of the area and for the United Nations. To ensure their economic and social development, the countries of the area had to rely primarily on the efforts they themselves were prepared to make, but they would clearly make no progress until peace based on law and justice had been restored.

47. Mr. ANDERSON (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that UNESCO had for many years maintained working relations with the regional economic commissions and noted the areas in which such collaboration might be extended, as brought out in the reports. Referring to the conferences organized by UNESCO with the collaboration of the regional economic commissions, he was pleased to note that there would be close co-operation with ECE in its conference on science and technology. UNESCO had already held with ECA, and was preparing to hold with ECE, joint staff meetings, which proved extremely useful in the co-ordination of activities. He also wished to mention that there had been close and fruitful collaboration between the various institutes set up by the commissions and the regional institutes of UNESCO.

48. Mr. TONWE (Observer for Nigeria), speaking under rule 75 of the rules of procedure, said he wished that the many projects undertaken by United Nations bodies for economic and social development would be less theoretical

and more tangible. Regrettably, the great majority of industrialized countries had not yet agreed to earmark 1 per cent of their national income for aid to the developing countries. It was to be hoped that the work of ECE would have a beneficial effect on the international economic situation and that UNCTAD would succeed in improving the situation in international trade. The work of the United Nations should be strengthened at the regional and sub-regional levels, but no region could progress if the policies of the various countries of which it was composed did not encourage friendly relations. In that connexion he deplored that the Tanzanian representative had seen fit at the 1540th meeting to refer to current problems in Nigeria. The Tanzanian representative had claimed that his observations concerned only the humanitarian aspects of the situation; but it was common knowledge that the Nigerian Government was in fact trying to consolidate its structures and institutions in order to improve the lot of the people of the whole country, whereas Tanzania had consistently aided the rebels by every possible means, thus perpetuating the present state of affairs and, as a result, the sufferings of those with whom it claimed to have sympathy. The Nigerian Government was the first to wish to relieve the sufferings of the people in the secessionist region, and had even offered to transport assistance intended for them by the most expeditious means, but the offer had been rejected by the rebel leader. His delegation asked all countries that sympathized with the secessionists to persuade them to agree to aid being sent by the most expeditious route.

49. Mr. NYIRABU (United Republic of Tanzania) deplored that the Nigerian representative had started a political argument on a matter not on the Council's agenda. He reserved the right to reply at a later stage.

50. The PRESIDENT announced that the general discussion on agenda item 14 was concluded. He invited the Council to vote on the draft resolutions on the annual reports of ECE, ECAFE and ECLA, as submitted by those commissions in part IV of their reports.

*The draft resolution on the report of ECE (E/4491) was adopted unanimously.*

*The draft resolution on the report of ECAFE (E/4498) was adopted unanimously.*

*The draft resolution on the report of ECLA (E/4499) was adopted unanimously.*

51. The PRESIDENT pointed out that the report of ECA contained no draft resolution for the Council. He therefore proposed that the Council should adopt the following text:

*" The Economic and Social Council*

*" 1. Takes note of the annual report of the Economic Commission for Africa for the period 26 February 1967 to 29 February 1968;*

*" 2. Endorses the programme of work and priorities contained in the report;*

*" 3. Approves the amendments to the terms of reference and to the rules of procedure of the Economic Commission for Africa, as contained in a note by the Executive Secretary in paragraphs 231-235 of the annual report."*

*The draft resolution on the report of ECA (E/4497) was adopted unanimously.*

52. The PRESIDENT said that the consensus of the meeting appeared to be that the revised draft resolution should be referred to the Co-ordination Committee before the Council took a decision on it.

*It was so decided.*

53. Mr. BRILLANTES (Philippines) asked whether some delegations might be allowed to submit to the Council a draft resolution concerning chapter IV of the report on the meetings of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions (E/4560).

54. The PRESIDENT replied that the delegations concerned would have an opportunity to do so when the Council resumed its consideration of item 14 after the Co-ordination Committee had returned the revised draft resolution with its comments.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.