



ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL
E/CN.12/AC.44/SR.2
21 May 1959

ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Eighth Session
Panama City, Panama

COMMITTEE III

(General Business)

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND MEETING

Held at Panama City on Wednesday, 20 May 1959, at 4 p.m.

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/PRESENT:

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. FRANCO	Colombia
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. GEORGES PICOT	France
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. LERENA	Argentina
	Mr. DUPRAT	Brazil
	Mr. VALDIVIESO	Chile
	Mr. DIAZ	Colombia
	Mr. BOTI	Cuba
	Mr. ICAZA	Ecuador
	Mr. MAZARIEGOS	Guatemala
	Mr. ORDOÑEZ	Honduras
	Mr. URQUIDI	Mexico
	Mr. van SUCHTELEN	Netherlands
	Mr. AMADO	Panama
	Mr. BARNES	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. KOTSCHNIG	United States of America
	Mr. PONS	Uruguay
	Mr. MOANACK	Venezuela

ALSO PRESENT:

Observers from States
not members of the
Commission:

Mr. HOLLAI	Hungary
Mr. MIKHAILOV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

/Secretariat:

Observer from an
inter-governmental
organization:

Mrs. KYBAL

Organization of American
States

Secretariat:

Mr. MALINOWSKI

Director, Regional
Commissions Section

Mr. SWENSON

Deputy Director,
Economic Commission
for Latin America

Mr. SANTA CRUZ

Secretary of the
Commission

/CO-ORDINATION WITH

CO-ORDINATION WITH THE INTER-AMERICAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Mr. DIAZ (Colombia) said he was glad that the agreements on co-operation between IA-ECOSOC and ECLA were satisfactory. The main purpose of such co-ordination was to avoid duplication of effort and the report emphasized the necessity for Governments to agree among themselves for that purpose.

Mr. DUPRAT (Brazil) associated himself with the Colombian representative's remarks on the importance of co-operation between IA-ECOSOC and ECLA.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Secretary of the Commission) suggested that the joint report of the Executive Secretary of ECLA and the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council on co-operation and co-ordination between the two secretariats (E/CN.12/515) should be read out.

Mr. PONS (Uruguay) proposed that note should be taken of the report without having it read out.

It was so agreed.

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES

(b) Preparation for the appraisal of the programme for the period 1959-64 (E/CN.12/500)

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Secretary of the Commission) presented the report on preparation for programme appraisal for 1959-64 (E/CN.12/500). That document, which had been prepared in accordance with the Economic and Social Council's instructions, would be incorporated in a comprehensive report to be presented to the Council by the Secretary-General. In it the secretariat analyzed the trends observable in the studies and activities it had undertaken from its establishment to the present day, and went on to examine the prospects for its work up to 1964. The document did not relate to the specific programme of work for the coming five years but was designed to provide the Council with general information for its guidance. The secretariat would like to hear the views of delegations on the report.

Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) considered that the report was among the best yet prepared by the United Nations. The activities of the United Nations had become so vast and complex in some fields that at time their purpose was difficult to discern. The programmes and activities

/envisaged in

envisaged in the document before the Committee were so numerous as to appear impossible to carry out, even if the staff was augmented as proposed. He felt, therefore, that an order of priorities would have to be set from year to year, as the circumstances and the available resources of the moment might dictate. In addition it would be necessary to draw on the resources of other organizations within and outside the United Nations; for example, it should be possible to institute more effective co-operation with the specialized agencies and, as national administrative services improved, to entrust some tasks and some programmes to countries themselves. On behalf of his Government, he warmly congratulated the secretariat on its excellent report.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Secretary of the Commission) explained that the secretariat's intention had been, not to enumerate all the programmes it envisaged putting into effect, but to prepare a list of many possible programmes so that delegations might pick out those they considered most important.

With regard to co-operation with other bodies, the report indicated the intention to develop closer working relations with the specialized agencies and with government agencies.

The CHAIRMAN speaking as the representative of Colombia, observed that countries were now more interdependent than ever before. He suggested that ECLA should study the problems of interdependence between the American countries and the rest of the world.

/Mr. URQUIDI

Mr. URQUIDI (Mexico) congratulated the secretariat on the report. At a plenary meeting his delegation had expressed concern at the dispersion evident in ECLA's activities and had requested that they should be limited to three categories: (a) work on economic development, (b) work on the Latin American common market, and (c) work on industrialization. Limited goals would have to be set for those categories in the next few years. He felt, too, that some tasks could be handed over to Governments and others could be performed in co-operation with the specialized agencies.

The report would probably require some modification before being transmitted to the Council, for at the current session some ideas had been clarified, especially on the subject of the common market. He criticized some points of detail, such as the objectives set in paragraph 95 concerning the enlargement of the list of goods in free trade in Central America. It was for the Central American Economic Co-operation Committee, and not the secretariat, to strive for those objectives. With regard to the budgetary implications set forth at the end of the document, he considered that expenditure should be kept as low as possible and that greater efforts should be made to use the resources rationally by setting a judicious order of priorities.

Mr. van SUCHTELEN (Netherlands) said that his delegation attached great importance to the secretariat's report and had supported the resolutions in which the Council has asked for the report. Such five-year programmes provided a clear picture of economic and social activities and made it possible to detect in time any gaps in the system. The secretariat was to be

/congratulated

congratulated on its admirable report, but in his view the Commission should concentrate on regional questions, especially the common market. The Joint ECLA/TAO Economic Development Training Group shared that view fully, and work on that important task should continue. He stressed the value of the following parts of the Five-year Programme: (a) the course and causes of inflation in Latin America; (b) the improvement of methods of preparing budgets; (c) studies of various industries in co-operation with the Department of Economic Affairs; (d) studies of agricultural products; and (e) studies of the proposed common market. ECLA could help the Council in its work by proposing an order of priorities.

Mr. BARNES (United Kingdom) congratulated the secretariat. The report before the Committee was extensive and forceful, and would be a very useful guide in drawing up programmes. He too felt that the ground covered was too extensive in proportion to the available or foreseeable resources. The Commission would have to curb its ambitions and concentrate on tasks of primary importance and on urgent activities of benefit to the region as a whole.

Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (France) considered that emphasis should be laid on the importance, not only of trade within the region, but also of external trade. A higher priority should be given to matters connected with the problems of world trade in primary commodities and to the Latin American common market.

Mr. IGAZA (Ecuador) observed that a shortage of funds did not justify the abandonment of programmes of work. A better solution was to improve

ECLA's working capacity, so that it could undertake more. A study of water resources by ECLA technicians would be of great significance to his country.

Mr. ORDÓÑEZ (Honduras) supported the idea of an order of priorities; but he too considered that ECLA should have larger funds and more staff. It was to be hoped that the Central American countries would still be able to rely on the Commission's valuable assistance.

Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Secretary of the Commission) said that it was difficult to set the projects enumerated in document E/CN.12/500 in order of priority. A more practical step would be to draw up criteria for the assignment of priority and to make a recommendation on the subject.

With regard to the observations just made by the Mexican representative, he said that the report would have to be laid before the Council in its present form because there was no time to change it. However, a report on the current discussions would be rendered in due course in order to acquaint the Council with delegations' views.

Mr. URQUIDI (Mexico) and the CHAIRMAN, referring to the Ecuadorian representative's statement, said respectively that the United Nations Special Fund and the Inter-American Bank were the most suitable agencies to render the type of assistance he had mentioned.

Mr. URQUIDI (Mexico) proposed that the Committee should take note of the report submitted by the Commission and adopt a text similar to that adopted by the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East.

After an exchange of views in which the CHAIRMAN, Mr. PONS (Uruguay),

/Mr. LERENA

Mr. LERENA (Argentina) and Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Secretary of the Commission) took part, it was decided to adjourn the examination of the current item until the next meeting.

(c) Control and limitation of documentation (E/CN.12/514)

Mr. URQUIDI (Mexico) expressed disagreement with the method of preparing the official records in use at the present session. The summary records reported only the shortest introductions, while important statements were left out altogether and circulated verbatim as information documents. Since information documents had no official status and were mainly intended for the use of the Press, there was a risk that after a few months they would be unobtainable. When the General Assembly had called for a reduction in the volume of documentation it had intended that that reduction should be effected without loss in the quality and usefulness of documents.

Mr. KOTSCHNIG (United States of America) acknowledged the necessity of reducing the volume of documentation, but agreed with the Mexican representative that the official records should summarize all statements made.

Mr. BARNES (United Kingdom) considered that there was a great deal of waste documentation; he would support any decision by the Committee to cut down the volume. In his opinion, however, such a reduction could be effected without loss of quality. He favoured a return to the previous method of preparing summary records.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.