
ADDRESS BY SECRETARY-GENERAL TRYGVE LIE

AT THE OPENING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR LATIN AMERICA

His Excellency, The President of the Republic of Cuba,
Mr. Chairman,
Delegates,

I am very glad to come again to this beautiful and hospitable country for the opening of the second session of the Economic Commission for Latin America. This is my third visit to Cuba and I can tell you sincerely I wish such visits, not only to Cuba, but to all Latin America, would come more often.

I am also happy to have this opportunity to express my admiration of the cooperative spirit of the Latin American countries in the work of the United Nations.

The Republics of Latin America have recently helped to show how powerful an influence for peace can be exerted by the middle-sized and small countries, by using the opportunities offered to them by the United Nations.

At the same time as our meeting here, another meeting important to the future peace of the world is taking place in Paris. I refer, of course, to the Council of Foreign Ministers.

One of the reasons why the Great Powers, after 17 months, have resumed their efforts to reach a settlement in Europe, is the influence for conciliation that was brought

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to bear upon the Great Power conflict over Germany by the other member countries.

It was Mexico that introduced in the General Assembly at Paris last fall the resolution calling on the Great Powers to renew their efforts to settle their differences. It attracted such strong support that it was unanimously adopted.

The spirit exemplified by this resolution set in motion many pressures and many efforts in the direction of conciliation. One of the most important was led by another country of Latin America - by Argentina. These efforts were not immediately successful. But in the long run the deadlock was broken, for this and other reasons.

I think that Mexico and Argentina and all of the Republics of Latin America have every right to be proud of their influential part in bringing about this renewal of the efforts of the Great Powers to reach agreement on a settlement of the war.

Powerful influences can also be mobilized by the smaller and medium-sized countries in the United Nations for economic and social progress. One of the most important ways this can be done is through regional cooperation within the universal framework of the United Nations.

This is what the United Nations provides through its Economic Commissions for Europe, for Asia and the Far East and for Latin America - all of them linked together and all responsible to the Economic and Social Council.

The Economic Commission for Latin America is the youngest of the three. This session of the Commission will, I hope, bring to a close the first period of the Commission's activities, which may be broadly described as preparatory work for future action.

The Economic Commission for Latin America met for the first time a year ago. It had before it several

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organizational tasks. It arranged for cooperation and coordination of its work with the Inter-American System. It reviewed the major economic problems confronting the countries of the region - problems which were the reason for establishing the Commission. It instructed the Commission Secretariat to undertake studies of economic conditions in Latin America in agreement with its mandate which stated that the Commission shall :

"make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and development within the territories of Latin America as the Commission deems appropriate."

This was not a simple task for a newly created Commission Secretariat, which had to overcome initial difficulties of recruitment of competent professional personnel, to overcome scarcity of many data, and to proceed with its research and prepare reports for this session that, in scope and approach, may be said to be without precedent in this region.

There is no question that these are preliminary studies that will have to be continued, and improved in the future. I draw your attention to them because they carry out the Commission's earlier decisions. They also bring to the forefront of this session not only an analysis of the economic situation in Latin America but the question of implementing the primary task of the Commission. This has been stated in the first paragraph of its terms of reference :

The Commission shall "initiate and participate in measures facilitating concerted action for dealing with urgent economic problems arising out of the war, raising the level of economic activity in Latin America and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the Latin American...

/countries...

countries, both among themselves and with other countries of the world".

As the Economic Survey of Latin America and other studies make clear, the economic structure of Latin America has not substantially changed since the pre-war years. However, there are several signs of new trends which have been encouraged during the war and post-war years. Some progress has been made in crop diversification. Standards of nutrition have improved in some of the countries. Industrial production has been expanded, in comparison with pre-war. The trade of several Latin American countries has expanded and Latin America as a whole has shown a tendency toward greater participation in world trade than ever before.

In spite of these favorable developments, Latin America still faces many difficult problems.

Although Latin American countries have fortunately escaped the destruction that war has inflicted upon other continents, they are faced with problems which have emerged from or have been aggravated by the war and its aftermath.

In particular, they are confronted with a need for faster economic development.

The main task of this session, as I see it, is to decide which activity offer the best opportunity for fruitful international action to this end and to build the organizational framework for a concerted regional program.

In this task, I assure you, the Commission and its Secretariat will have at its disposal the resources and

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Puedo asegurar a Uds. que para tal tarea, la Comisión y su Secretaría dispondrán de los recursos y la experiencia de las Naciones Unidas en conjunto. La Secretaría de la Comisión es parte integrante del Departamento de Asuntos Económicos y sostiene una continua colaboración y consulta con las oficinas de la Sede.

Si bien la colaboración entre la Secretaría de esta Comisión y las oficinas de la Sede fué siempre muy estrecha, estoy persuadido de que lo será todavía más en el porvenir. Esperamos ver ampliada rápidamente la modesta ayuda técnica que hasta hoy hemos podido brindar a los países insuficientemente desarrollados. La naturaleza de tales actividades requerirá, cada vez en mayor medida, la estrecha colaboración de las oficinas de la Sede con las de las diversas comisiones económicas regionales.

Es de todos vosotros conocida la importancia que la Asamblea General y el Consejo Económico y Social atribuyen al desarrollo económico de los países insuficientemente desarrollados. Este interés encontró una expresión concreta durante la primera parte del tercer período de sesiones de la Asamblea General, en París, cuando las Naciones Unidas, sin un solo voto en contra, decidieron asignar una modesta suma, de menos de 300,000 dólares, para permitir a la Organización ofrecer ayuda técnica para el desarrollo económico.

Dicha resolución está siendo puesta en práctica rápidamente. El número de solicitudes que ya hemos recibido, en el curso de los cuatro primeros meses de actividad rebasa con mucho nuestra capacidad de financiarlas. Sin embargo, puedo asegurar a Uds. que un satisfactorio término de las negociaciones en curso permitirá proporcionar ayuda técnica a varios de los países que son miembros de esta Comisión. No divulgo secreto alguno, al informar que se realizan

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conversaciones oficiales con los Gobiernos del Ecuador, Guatemala y México, respecto a peticiones de ayuda que van desde simple asesoramiento en materias específicas hasta el envío de misiones económicas de carácter general. Varios otros países miembros de la Comisión han iniciado conversaciones oficiosas sobre la materia.

A este respecto no debo por cierto dejar de informarles que la primera misión económica de carácter general enviada por las Naciones Unidas a un país, fué la de Haití. Dicha misión fué despachada en octubre de 1948, es decir, dos meses antes de que la Asamblea General adoptara su resolución sobre ayuda técnica. El informe de dicha misión se halla en las fases finales de su elaboración y pronto será transmitido al Presidente de la República de Haití.

Se han recibido además, cerca de setenta solicitudes de becas para estudios en el exterior relacionados con la formación profesional en el extranjero de peritos de países insuficientemente desarrollados. Más de la mitad del total de dichas solicitudes procede de países latinoamericanos y de las diez y siete recomendaciones favorables al otorgamiento de becas que hasta la fecha me ha presentado el Comité de Selección, más de la mitad son para peritos de países latinoamericanos.

Confío, sin embargo, en que tal actividad no es sino el comienzo de un programa mucho más amplio que podríamos desarrollar en el curso del año próximo y en los años venideros.

Como ustedes saben, el Consejo Económico y Social me pidió, durante su octavo período de sesiones, que le presentara, para su examen en el noveno período un plan detallado para el desarrollo de un programa mucho más amplio de ayuda técnica. Tal petición fué una consecuencia directa del cuarto punto del discurso inaugural pronunciado por el Presidente de los Estados Unidos de América al iniciar su segundo período de funciones, el 20 de enero de 1949.

United States at the beginning of his second term of office on January 20, 1949.

In this address President Truman called for a bold new program of assistance to under-developed countries in the interest of raising the standard of living of the peoples of those countries.

He proposed that wherever practicable this program should be carried out through the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Accordingly the representative of the United States Government tabled a resolution during the Eighth Session of the Economic and Social Council in which I was requested to develop an expanded program of technical assistance in consultation with the executive heads of the specialized agencies.

The report containing the plan for this expanded program has been completed and is being made available to Member governments this week, so that they may be in a position to give it the extended study and consideration which it deserves before it is formally considered by the Council in July and later by the General Assembly.

The expanded program proposes expenditures of over \$30,000,000 during the first year of its operation. It calls for the collaboration of all member governments of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies in the provision of services, supplies and funds. It is planned as a truly international program to which all member governments should make their contributions, however modest these may have to be in some instances.

There is no country which does not have something that another country could not effectively use in its economic development. For example, last year, the

government of Mexico in collaboration with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Statistical Office of the United Nations found it possible to provide rather extensive facilities for the organization of a temporary statistical institute in which statisticians from a group of Latin American countries received training in the planning and execution of population and agricultural censuses. This year similar arrangements are being made in Guatemala with the generous cooperation of the Government of Guatemala. Other countries in other parts of the world have made similar generous offers.

I wished to elaborate somewhat on those aspects of the United Nations technical assistance program that, I hope, will be of importance to Latin America. It was not, however, intended that your attention should be directed from the overwhelming task of this session of the Commission which will, I believe, be centered on effective intra-regional and, as far as feasible, inter-regional cooperation. In this main task, I wish you fruitful results and I shall watch your deliberations with the utmost interest.

I am aware of the efforts that have been and are still being made towards developing the great resources of Latin America for the benefit to its peoples.

Such efforts will contribute not only to raising their economic standards of living but will also make possible the full enjoyment of the fundamental rights and freedoms which form part of the deep-rooted traditions of large portions of these peoples and which correspond

/to their highest