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GENERAL

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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

MEMORANDUM OF MEASURES TO INCREASE
THE AVAILABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL MATERIALS IN THE REGION OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

Submitted by the Director-General of the
United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization for consideration by
the Third Session of the Regional Economic
Commission for Latin America
(Montevideo, 5 June to 18 June 1950)



I. INTRODUCTION

1. UNESCO is required by the terms of its Constitution to "collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples", to "give fresh impulse to popular education", to "maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge", to "recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image", and to initiate "methods of international co-operation calculated to give the people of all countries access to the printed and published materials produced by any of them". ^{1/}

2. UNESCO has recognized that if it is to achieve these Constitutional aims, it must take an active part in efforts to increase trade in commodities entering into its sphere of interest and which fall under the general description of educational, scientific and cultural materials.

3. Even before the war, many countries experienced a serious shortage of these materials, which handicapped the intellectual advancement of their peoples. Schools lacked basic educational materials, scientific laboratories were inadequately supplied with equipment, libraries were poorly stocked, and the general public did not have sufficient access to the various sources of knowledge. These shortages were aggravated by war-time destruction on the one hand, and the serious post-war disruption of production and the maladjustments in international trade, on the other. The latter, in particular, made the replenishing of war losses and the procurement of urgently-required new materials very difficult. Such shortages,

^{1/} Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Article I. 2(a), (b); (c).

and the curtailment of trade in educational, scientific and cultural materials, adversely affect almost every aspect of UNESCO's programme.

4. Accordingly, the Fourth Session (as well as preceding Sessions) of the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a series of resolutions, quoted in Annex I of this document, the purpose of which was to engage the Secretariat and Member States of UNESCO in activities to promote the availability of educational scientific and cultural materials.

II. SURVEY OF ACTION TO DATE

5. It may be of assistance to the Commission, in considering the proposals contained in this document, to have before it a brief survey of the action taken thus far by UNESCO, in accordance with the resolutions of the General Conference, to reduce tariff and trade barriers to the international circulation of educational, scientific and cultural materials.

6. As a basis for all of its activities in this field, the Secretariat of UNESCO has collected, in a continuing fashion, information on economic obstacles to the free flow of information. The lack of precise data on the complex tariff and trade regulations which today govern the international exchange of educational, scientific and cultural materials (along with other commodities) constitutes in itself an obstacle to the circulation of these materials. Therefore, one remedial measure being taken by UNESCO is the publication in 1950 of a manual, "Trade Barriers to Knowledge", setting forth in detail the national regulations affecting the import and export of books, works of art, scientific apparatus and materials of a similar character.

7. Broadly, the activities of UNESCO in this field up to now fall into the following three categories:

- A. Sponsorship of international Agreements,
- B. Collaboration with the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to promote reduced import duties on educational, scientific and cultural materials, by means of /tariff negotiations.

tariff negotiations.

C. Collaboration with the Regional Economic Commissions of the United Nations.

These three phases are described hereunder:

A. International Agreements

(i) Agreement for Facilitating the International Circulation of Visual and Auditory Materials of an Educational, Scientific and Cultural Character.

8. Adopted by the Third Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, this Agreement has been signed by 17 countries and ratified by one, Norway. It comes into operation upon ratification by ten countries. The Agreement would remove customs duties and quantitative restrictions and eliminate import licensing systems for auditory and visual materials certified by governmental authorities to be of an educational, scientific or cultural character. The materials covered by the Agreement are:

- (a) Films, filmstrips and microfilm;
- (b) Sound recordings;
- (c) Glass slides, models, wall charts, maps and posters.

(ii) Draft Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials

9. The original text of this Draft Agreement was suggested to UNESCO by the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, at their Third Session, in the summer of 1949. The 34 countries represented at that conference, in response to a request for advice submitted by the Director-General of UNESCO, drafted the text of a broad international Agreement which it recommended for UNESCO sponsorship.

10. The Fourth Session of the General Conference of UNESCO instructed the Director-General to circulate the Draft Agreement to governments for official comment and to convene a meeting of experts or representatives from UNESCO Member States to redraft the Agreement in the light of the comment received.

11. The meeting was held in Geneva from 1 to 15 March 1950,
/with 25 countries

with 25 countries participating. It approved unanimously a revised text of the Draft Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials. The text has been submitted for adoption to the Fifth Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, meeting in Florence in May/June 1950.

B. Collaboration with the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

12. While carrying forward the two above-mentioned international Agreements, UNESCO has sought to promote reductions on import duties on educational, scientific and cultural materials in bilateral and multilateral tariff negotiations. Although the international Agreements, when they come into force, will abolish duties on many items of an educational, scientific or cultural character, tariff negotiations offer an opportunity for immediate reductions in duties and also may apply to materials not covered by the Agreements.

13. In this undertaking, UNESCO has enjoyed the full co-operation and assistance of the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). At the request of the Director-General of UNESCO, the Third Session of the Contracting Parties to the GATT, meeting at Annecy, France, in the summer of 1949, facilitated negotiations for reduced duties on radio receivers and a number of other items of an educational nature. The conference also informed the Director-General that "insofar as possible, governments in future tariff negotiations will attempt to assist in furthering the objectives of UNESCO".

14. In addition, as noted in paragraph 9 above, the Third Session of the Contracting Parties to the GATT prepared for UNESCO the first draft of the Tariff and trade provisions of the Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials.

15. The Contracting Parties to the GATT, at their Fourth Session, took note of the statement of their preceding Session that the objectives of UNESCO would be borne in mind. This was relevant to the large-scale tariff and trade negotiations among some 40 countries, to take place at Torquay, England, beginning in September 1950. The Director-General of

/UNESCO will

UNESCO will request that the Torquay Conference make the fullest possible provision for educational, scientific and cultural materials.

C. Collaboration with the Regional Economic Commissions of the United Nations

16. In general, the action described above, that is, the international Agreements and the work with the Contracting Parties to the GATT, has had the effect of reducing obstacles to the international circulation of educational, scientific and cultural materials. Complementing this activity, on the positive side, it was necessary to promote the availability of these materials. In this phase, UNESCO has sought the assistance of the Regional Economic Commissions of the United Nations.

17. This co-operative effort of UNESCO and the Regional Economic Commissions was approved by the Ninth Session of the Economic and Social Council, which on 22 July 1949 adopted the following resolution:

" The Economic and Social Council

Taking note of Resolution No. 32 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information, and of the investigations of UNESCO into the technical needs of war-devastated and under-developed countries, and inter alia, of its conclusion regarding newsprint;

Expresses its satisfaction with the work presently being undertaken and extended by UNESCO in this field in co-operation with the regional economic commissions and the interested Specialized Agencies,

and

Requests the aforementioned to continue to co-operate with UNESCO".

The text of Resolution No. 32 cited above, is as follows:

" THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
Having Considered the investigations of UNESCO into the technical needs of war-devastated countries:

1. Expresses the hope that UNESCO will proceed with the utmost speed to carry out the programme it has prepared in this connection;

/2. Notes with

- " 2. NOTES with satisfaction that UNESCO is taking expeditious steps for ascertaining the requirements of other countries, whose detailed wants have not been investigated so far but which are handicapped, on account of material inadequacies, in making satisfactory arrangements for the provision of domestic and international information;
3. RECOMMENDS that the Economic and Social Council instruct its regional economic commissions and request the competent Specialized Agencies to assist UNESCO in its task of reducing the inequalities in information facilities caused by the devastations due to war, or other handicaps, and
4. FURTHER RECOMMENDS that very early arrangements may be made by UNESCO, with the help of other Specialized Agencies concerned in the matter, for dealing with the requirements of these countries".

18. Two phases characterize the action taken or projected with the Regional Economic Commissions:

(a) Gathering of information on the requirements of various countries for educational, scientific and cultural materials, on the one hand, and the supply possibilities for these materials, on the other.

(b) On the basis of the information so gathered, promoting increased production and trade in the materials under survey.

19. With these two objects in view, the Director-General of Unesco on 27 September 1949, submitted to the Fifth Session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East a Memorandum on Economic Measures Designed to Increase the Availability of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials in the ECAFE Region^{1/}, along the lines of the present document. Discussion of this item in the Commission resulted in the adoption of a Resolution^{2/}, welcoming the co-operation established between the two Organizations and setting up a small working

1/ E/CN.11/199 and Annex A.

2/ See Annex II

party consisting of members of the two Secretariats and of appropriate government experts.

20. The first meeting of the working party took place in New Delhi on 21-22 December 1949. It took the following decisions:

(a) Established a priority list of 12 categories of scientific materials and an approximately equal number of auditory and visual aids to education,^{1/} with the understanding that subsequent phases of the project might cover text books, books of general interest, printing paper and newsprint, art and music materials, and press, radio and film equipment.

(b) Instructed the Executive Secretary of the ECAFE to circulate the list to governments of the Region, as well as those of Australia and New Zealand, and to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan, with a request for information on import needs and supply possibilities.

(c) Agreed, as a means of expediting the enquiry, to limit the survey to the estimated import needs of governments, universities and higher educational institutions, and primary and secondary schools, for the period 1950-52.

21. At the same time, the Economic Commission for Europe, in conformity with co-operative arrangements established with UNESCO, undertook to circulate to governments of the European Region the same list of materials circulated in the ECAFE region. European governments were asked to state the supply possibilities, including estimated dates of delivery, for the listed items. The ECE also agreed to dispatch to governments in its region the lists of requirements in Asia and the Far East which would emerge from the ECAFE enquiry.

22. A second meeting of the UNESCO/ECAFE working party is to take place in Bangkok in the autumn of 1950. Wide participation is expected on the part of the government experts from the region, and the meeting

^{1/} See Annex III

will also include representatives from interested governments outside the region. The working party will consider the information received from the ECAFE and ECE surveys, and will decide upon appropriate action to promote the availability of the surveyed educational and scientific materials in Asia and the Far East.

III. PROPOSALS FOR CO-OPERATIVE ACTION WITH THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

23. It was envisaged that UNESCO's work with the Regional Economic Commissions would be developed in stages, both geographically and in the categories of materials covered. Action with the ECE and the ECAFE has now reached a point at which, it is believed, it might be profitably extended to Latin America. Thus, the information on needs and on sources of supply for educational, scientific and cultural materials in other regions, now being received by the Secretariat, might usefully be disseminated to governments of the Latin American region. Furthermore, the ECE has already stated that it would be prepared to establish the same information exchange for the ECLA that it has instituted for the ECAFE.

24. It is proposed, therefore, that the Third Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America:

(a) Study, in collaboration with UNESCO, the requirements and the availabilities with regard to educational, scientific and cultural materials in countries of the Latin American region. Following the precedent of the ECAFE, the Commission may consider that the most expedient method of undertaking this study and of determining upon the action to be taken subsequently, is by the establishment of a working party of government experts, with the participation of the Secretariats of the ECAFE and UNESCO.

(b) Consider the list of scientific materials and auditory and visual aids to education, contained in Annex III of this document, and determine whether that list, already in use by the ECE and ECAFE, or some new list, might be established as the basis for the first enquiry into the needs and productive capacity of countries in the ECLA Region.

/(c) Examine

(c) Examine ways in which the production of educational, scientific and cultural materials might be stimulated in countries within the region, especially where idle productive capacity exists, thus increasing the availabilities for export, particularly in intra-regional trade.

(d) Determine, on the basis of the data received from all regions, the potential buyers and sellers with regard to educational, scientific and cultural materials, and, in collaboration with the other Regional Economic Commissions and with UNESCO, facilitate the conclusion of procurement agreements:

- (i) between countries within the ECLA region;
- (ii) with countries outside the region.

ANNEX I

" The Director-General is instructed

" To collect and analyse,
information on obstacles to
and to publish or arrange
studies;

" To analyse such obstacle
nations of persons and of
cultural material as deriv

" To submit to the Fifth Session of the Conference a report and, if adopted, for adoption by the Conference;

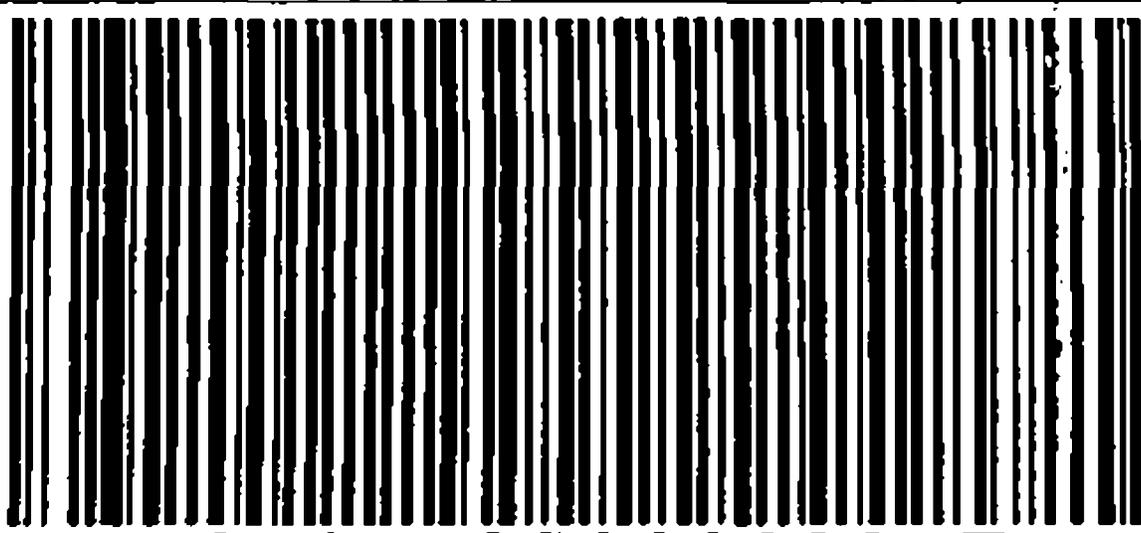
" Recommendations to Member States

" That, where currency exchange rates which they maintain at present lead to a substantial increase, the amount of foreign exchange available for the purchase from abroad of scientific and cultural books and periodicals be increased;

" That, pending negotiations concerning the Draft Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials, they should facilitate, by all possible means, the international circulation of such materials and should remove as far as possible, at the earliest date, all restrictions hampering this circulation, including those within territories subject to military control of Member States".

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ANNEX III

A. SCIENTIFIC MATERIALS

- I. Optical Instruments
- II. Balances and Weights
- III. Laboratory Glassware, Porcelain Ware and Sillica Ware
- IV. Electrical Measuring Instruments
- V. Analytical and Clinical Testing Apparatus
- VI. Vacuum Pumps, Gauges, Sealing Products, Grease for Taps
- VII. Radio and Electronic Equipment
- VIII. Electrotechnical Equipment
- IX. Temperature Measurement and Constant Temperature Apparatus
- X. Shop Equipment and Tools
- XI. Surveying, Recording and Drawing Instruments
- XII. Pure Chemicals, Culture Media, Photographic Emulsions.

B. AUDITORY AND VISUAL AIDS IN EDUCATION

- I. Films and Film Equipment
 - 16 mm film projectors (sound)
 - 16 mm film projectors (silent)
 - Film strip projectors
 - Projection lamps
 - Screens
 - Educational films
 - Film strips
 - Lantern slides
 - 35 mm microfilm - positive
 - 16 mm microfilm - positive
 - II. Maps, Charts, etc.
 - Charts for educational purposes
 - Maps for educational purposes
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