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STATUS OF THE PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

(Note by the secretariat)

In response to the requests formulated by a number of Governments, the Economic and Social Council decided, in its resolution 917 (XXXIV), to convene a United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Subsequently, the General Assembly endorsed this decision in its resolution 1785 (XVII). The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 955 (XXXVI), expresses the hope that the regional economic commissions will play an active role in the preparations for the Conference.

In another resolution (963 (XXXVI)), the Economic and Social Council approved the provisional agenda for the Conference drawn up at the first session of the Preparatory Committee, with any modifications that might be introduced at the third session of the Committee (New York, 3-18 February 1964). Furthermore, the Council decided that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should be held in Geneva, beginning on 23 March 1964, and continuing until 15 June 1964.

The Council invited the States which will participate in the Conference to give earnest consideration to proposals for concrete and practical international action and to explore the most effective means of making it possible to reach, at the Conference, basic agreements on measures constituting a new international trade and development policy.

The Economic Commission for Latin America in its turn, at its tenth session (Mar del Plata, Argentina, 6-17 May 1963), considered the holdings of the Conference with deep interest, and stressed its importance for Latin America, inasmuch as it would afford the region an opportunity of putting forward, at the world level, the serious problems arising in connexion with its trade relations, with adverse repercussions on its economic development. The Commission therefore adopted resolution 221 (X), which, besides recommending to the secretariat that it should give top priority to the studies intended for the Conference, also recommended that they should be supplemented by the inclusion of any further topics that might be conducive to a better presentation of Latin America's trade problems. At the same time, the secretariat was requested to organize a seminar, conducted with the co-operation of specialists appointed by the Governments of all the Latin American countries, in order to assemble background data that would enable the countries of the region to adopt a concerted position at the Conference.

The ECLA secretariat has concentrated its efforts on the implementation of this resolution, and its economists, with the able assistance of a group of distinguished consultants, have prepared a report on Latin America's international trade problems, their possible solutions and the points of view that the countries of this region might put forward conjointly at the world conference.

This document, entitled Latin America and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (E/CN.12/AC.57/6), will be presented at the Meeting of Latin American Government Experts on Trade Policy to be inaugurated at Brasilia on 20 January 1964, and will subsequently be submitted to the Committee of the Whole of the Commission, together with the final report of the Meeting (E/CN.12/AC.57/7).