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PROGRESS OF PREPARATORY WORK  
FOR MEETINGS MANDATED  
AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CDCC



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA (CEPAL) AND THE CARIBBEAN

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At the First Session of the CDCC specific authorizations were given for convening meetings (a) to consider establishment of a Special Régime for the Caribbean within the global convention for the Law of the Sea, and (b) of Rectors of Universities and Heads of Research Institutions on Transfer of Technology with special emphasis on food production. The mandates envisaged that these meetings might be organized early in 1976, and conducted at Port of Spain. The decisions on these meetings also took into account the fact that the ECLA Office did not embrace within its resources the specialist expertise, and so it was stipulated that the CDCC Secretariat should seek support from the relevant United Nations bodies for the preparation and conduct of these meetings.

Pursuing these decisions ECLA staff had various consultations with Officials of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and Officials of the United Nations University, the two bodies that had been stipulated by the CDCC. The Draft Provisional Agenda with annotations on the items prepared by the ECLA Office for the Law of the sea meeting is presented as Annex I, and a summary of the arrangements that emerged from the consultations with the United Nations University is attached as Annex II.

These annexures are presented with the view of obtaining CDCC approval on the scope and orientation of the discussions; and decisions on either (a) suitable timing for the meetings, or (b) postponement of these meetings until circumstances are more favourable.

Work-load in the other organizations from which support was sought coupled with some organizational difficulties, prevented the preparatory arrangements from proceeding as rapidly as had been hoped. As a consequence, after consultations with the President of the CDCC and with member governments in conformity with the rules of procedure of the CDCC, and also with the United Nations University, it was deemed advisable to postpone both these meetings in order to ensure adequate preparation. All CDCC member States were informed accordingly, and notified that in due course the CDCC Secretariat would consult the CDCC in order to establish more suitable timing for the two meetings.

MEETING OF EXPERTS ON LAW OF THE SEA

The CDCC Work Programme at Section I "Marine Resources" includes the mandate that the ECLA Secretariat should convene a meeting of the member States of the Committee at Expert level. The primary task of the Experts would be to develop the possibilities for establishing a Special Régime for the Caribbean within the framework of the global convention on the Law of the Sea.

The following draft provisional agenda is proposed with a view to obtaining the initial reaction of the Committee. These might include amendments to the items or additions so as to determine more precisely the scope of considerations.

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening statements.
2. Election of Officers.
3. Discussion and adoption of the Agenda.
4. Basic rights and essential economic interests of CDCC countries in relation to the resources of the sea.
5. Establishment of a Special Régime of the Law of the Sea in the Caribbean within the framework of the future general Law of the Sea.

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Notes on the Items

Election of Officers

The Rules of Procedure of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) provide that there should be a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur, the Chairman being the leader of the delegation of the host country. No alternative provisions are made in the Rules of Procedure regarding composition of the bureau for specialist meetings convened under the aegis of the CDCC or for subsidiary bodies of the CDCC.

Discussion and adoption of the Agenda

The CDCC Work Programme at Section I - Marine Resources - states "In order to assist the member States of the CDCC to protect their basic rights and essential economic interests as regards marine resources and to deal comprehensively with these matters, it has been requested that the ECLA secretariat convene a special meeting of the member States of the Committee, at the Expert level . . . . . The agenda of the meeting of experts should include, inter alia, an exchange of views on the issues being examined at the Conference on the Law of the Sea, with a view to . . . . obtaining, within the framework of the future general Law of the Sea, a Special Régime on the Law of the Sea for the Caribbean."

Accordingly the ECLA secretariat proposes two main items for consideration:

- i) Basic rights and essential economic interests of CDCC countries in relation to the resources of the sea;
- ii) Establishment of a Special Régime of the Law of the Sea in the Caribbean within the framework of the future general Law of the Sea.

Basic rights and essential economic interests of CDCC countries in relation to the resources of the sea

Two of the guidelines provided in the Constituent Declaration of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) are -

"Recognizing the importance and relevance of the sea and all its resources for the development, co-operation and self-determination of the Caribbean peoples;"

"Reaffirming in the spirit of various United Nations resolutions, that the countries of the sub-region have the inalienable right to exercise permanent sovereignty over their natural resources and economic activities, including nationalization, and that the countries of the Caribbean are united as one in mutual support and solidarity against any form of economic action, pressure or coercion that might be used against any one of them for having exercised its legitimate rights;".

More specific reference is made in the Work Programme to live marine resources in the terms -

"More rational advantage should be taken of the fishery resources of the Caribbean as, among other things, their exploitation would contribute to a considerable increase in the supply of low-priced protein-yielding foods, ...."

"It will be necessary to examine environmental protection of the Caribbean and its shore line from such dangers as oil spillage and its adverse effects on the exploitation of (live) marine resources. The availability of live marine resources in the area and their processing at sea and in shore-based plants will also be studied."

Fulfilment of the various references provided by the CDCC would require the Experts to initiate an assessment of the basic rights and essential economic interests of CDCC countries in the marine resources of the Caribbean. For this purpose country papers contributed by the CDCC States would be essential.

Establishment of a Special Régime of the Law of the Sea in the Caribbean within the framework of the future general Law of the Sea

The Constituent Declaration of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) at item 9 of its operative part requires that there be an examination of "..... the question of a common Caribbean position on the Law of the Sea aimed specifically at securing international recognition for a Special Régime for the Caribbean multi-State archipelago within the framework of the new International Convention on the Law of the Sea."

Meeting of Rectors of Universities  
and Heads of Research Institutions

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The CDCC decided at its first session that in the context of mutual sub-regional co-operation in the transfer and adaptation of imported technologies and the development of indigenous technologies, particularly in food technology and food production, it will be necessary to review the possibilities of developing close collaboration among the universities, faculties and institutes of technology, engineering and agriculture in the area. It was further decided that collaboration among the universities and other research institutions could be the subject of a special sectoral meeting of the Rectors of Universities of the Caribbean under the sponsorship of the Committee, in Port of Spain, in close collaboration with the United Nations University. This meeting would discuss science and technology, the production and processing of foodstuffs, care for health (mainly in rural areas), and education in its relationship to development.

Parallel with the CDCC decisions, there was an endorsement by the Council of the UN University at its June 1975 meeting in New York, that there should be established an association of the UN University and Universities in the Caribbean. On this basis the UN University initiated formal discussions with the Rectors of Caribbean Universities in the context of: (a) a UN University presence and influence aimed at (1) fostering international intellectual co-operation in the Caribbean, (2) increasing production, (3) improving the quality of life with reference to (i) science and the development of technology, (ii) increasing the production of food through intensification of research and application of appropriate technology, (iii) public health and rural medical care; and (b) organising through ECLA and its Office for the Caribbean, a meeting of Rectors and Heads of Faculties concerned (Technology and Engineering, Agriculture and Medicine).

From that round of discussions, the general view emerged that the meeting should not be confined to Heads of Universities, and that it could be desirable to enlarge the scope of the conference to include government ministers and public officials concerned with higher education and other organizations and agencies within the Caribbean

like UNICA,<sup>1/</sup> CARICOM (The Caribbean Community); and the CDB (Caribbean Development Bank). These Caribbean organizations, it was felt, would have a great deal to contribute towards the success of such a conference.

The general view regarding desirable mechanics was that:

(a) The meeting should be held in two stages: stage one being confined to specialists and technical experts such as Deans of Faculties and appropriate Government Officials in the four fields of agriculture, medicine/public health, technology/engineering and education, who would explore the main technical issues and obstacles to co-operation and effective development in the four subject areas and set out a detailed agenda; and stage two: the plenary conference attended by the Heads of the Universities and if possible Ministers of Education or Planning, and representatives of the agencies that would review and take decisions on the broad policy issues.

(b) A planning and organization committee be set up in Trinidad, comprising the Pro-Vice Chancellor of U.W.I. at St. Augustine, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Guyana, a representative of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and the Director of ECLA Office for the Caribbean, to proceed with the detailed planning and organizational work of the conference.

(c) The United Nations University to provide one officer a month before the start of the conference who will serve as a full-time co-ordinator and work with the conference planning and organising committee from the ECLA Office.

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<sup>1/</sup> The Association of Caribbean Universities which includes in addition to universities within the Caribbean region, members from the mainlands of North, Central and South America.