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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

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ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS AT THE FIRST SESSION  
OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST

(The following note has been prepared by the Secretariat at the suggestion of representatives of Member Governments who felt that the experience gained at the first session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East would be of value to delegates to the Economic Commission for Latin America)

1. Formal Agenda Items

(a) Credentials. In accordance with the Commission's Rules of Procedure, the credentials of each representative to the Commission and his designated alternate were handed to the Office of the Executive Secretary at the opening of the session. These credentials were then examined by the Chairman and Vice Chairman who subsequently reported on them orally to the Commission. The examination of credentials was carried out concurrently with the conduct of other Commission business.

(b) Rules of Procedure. The first business transacted by the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East after the election of its Chairman was the adoption of the draft Provisional Rules of Procedure which had been submitted by the Secretariat. The Commission then created a committee, the membership of which was open to all delegations, to consider these Provisional Rules of Procedure and to prepare, as required, a revised draft for approval by the Commission. This Committee met concurrently with plenary meetings of the Commission. The Rules of Procedure Committee then reported to an early plenary meeting of the Commission. After a brief discussion the Rules of Procedure were finally adopted.

2. Substantive Agenda Items

The Agenda adopted by the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East at its First Session resembles that of the Economic Commission for Latin America in that substantive matters arose primarily on one agenda item only. The Commission considered that its primary task was to draw up an immediate programme of investigation relating to the economic reconstruction of the

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devastated areas in Asia and the Far East and their economic problems in accordance with the mandate given to it at the time of its creation by the Economic and Social Council. As the Commission stated in its first report to the Economic and Social Council, it "had before it a tentative list of investigation topics drawn up by the Secretariat, and in the course of the general discussion suggestions and proposals were put forward by the various delegations."

In view of the importance of these suggestions and proposals for the Commission's future work, their discussion was undertaken by Delegations in plenary meetings of the Commission.

For the subsequent review of the resultant programme, meetings in committee of the whole were held to deal with final drafting. The final programme was then taken up by the Commission.

In this way, small delegations of, for example, one representative and one alternate were able to cover all aspects of the Commission's work as no discussion of substantive items was carried on concurrently with plenary sessions.

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Since the agenda of the Economic Commission for Latin America is approximately the same as that adopted at the first session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, similar arrangements may be regarded by the Commission as desirable.

The absence at this stage of technical or special reports, either by the Secretariat or special ad hoc bodies of the Commission, may be expected to result in a similar concentration of attention on the main items on the agenda which would be taken up in turn.

The Secretariat facilities available in Santiago are also similar so that concurrent meetings could not be fully serviced by the Secretariat.

These considerations may be of value to Delegations in their preparations for the Commission's first session.