

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL



E/CN.12/263
14 June 1951
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Fourth session
Mexico City

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON FUNCTIONS OF ECLA

Report of the Rapporteur

The Ad Hoc Committee on Functions of ECLA held six meetings under the chairmanship of the representative of Chile, Mr. Alberto Baltra Cortés.

The items assigned to the Committee were 13 and 14 of the agenda: Work Programme and Priorities and Review of Regional Economic Commissions by the Economic and Social Council.

As the former could not be discussed until the session had been in progress for some time and until a substantial number of resolutions had been adopted, the committee decided to discuss first the review of the regional economic commissions by the Economic and Social Council.

When considering this item on its agenda, the Committee examined the statement prepared by the Executive Secretary for submission to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Organization and Operation of the Economic and Social Council and its Commissions. The Executive Secretary's statement was approved unanimously by the Committee, which recorded that view in a separate resolution.

/In that
E/CN.12/263

In that statement the Executive Secretary suggested two additions to the Commission's terms of reference, first, that special attention in its activities should be given to the problems of economic development, and, secondly, that the Commission should be given powers to assist the Economic and Social Council and its Technical Assistance Committee in discharging their functions with respect to the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme in Latin America.

Both of the Executive Secretary's suggestions were adopted by the Committee in the form of recommendations to the Economic and Social Council.

The question of ECLA's continuance was fully discussed in view of the fact that the Economic and Social Council was to review its regional as well as its functional commissions at its forthcoming session.

It was unanimously agreed that the Commission was a useful and indispensable instrument for the solution of the economic problems of Latin America and that it should, therefore, not only be continued indefinitely, but should be expanded and strengthened.

This opinion was formally expressed in a joint resolution submitted by Brazil and Cuba, which not only expressed the view that the Commission should continue but also approved the statement of the Executive Secretary to the Ad Hoc Committee, and the recommendation to the Economic and Social Council that the paragraphs referred to should be added to the terms of reference of the

/Commission

Commission (E/CN.12/AC.15/3/Rev.2).

The delegation of the United States of America, in voting in favour of this draft resolution, made the following reservation with respect to the recommendation that ECLA should be continued indefinitely: "The United States delegation wishes to point out, however, that the United States, as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the organization and operation of the Economic and Social Council, will be confronted in that Committee with world-wide rather than regional questions and therefore its position respecting continuation and terms of reference will be affected by overall rather than regional considerations. It is not only a question affecting the three regional commissions but also the functional commissions and the Council itself".

The Cuban delegation submitted a draft resolution to amend rules 3, 10, 25 and 38 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission. The chief purpose of this draft resolution was to ensure that documentation for meetings of the Commission should be received by the member governments long enough in advance for it to be carefully studied.

The Cuban draft resolution was adopted with some amendments and may be found in document E/CN.12/AC.15/4/Rev.1, which is submitted for the Commission's approval.

The United States delegation asked that it be noted that its

/Government

Government would require at least five copies of the documents instead of the two copies agreed upon in the resolution.

The Cuban delegation wished to place on record that following suggestion: "The Executive Secretary, when distributing the studies prepared by him to Governments, might request those Governments who wished to do so to submit comments on the documents and, whenever he deemed it appropriate, might communicate those comments to other Governments."

The Committee took note of the Executive Secretary's statement on Work Programme and Priorities (E/CN.12/243) and unanimously agreed to adopt the document and the order of priorities suggested by the Executive Secretary. It also adopted the Executive Secretary's suggestion to leave to his discretion certain decisions to alter or abandon specific projects, or establish different priorities if he considered them justified. The text of the resolution on that question is contained in document E/CN.12/AC.15/6.

The delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom supported the resolution, but reserved the positions of their Governments respecting the financial implications of the work programme adopted. At the same time, they pointed out that their reservations were motivated solely by the fact that they had not yet received instructions from their Governments on the question and that they felt that its financial aspects should be examined

/together

together with those of the programmes of other United Nations organs.

Finally, the Committee, in a draft resolution, noted with satisfaction the Executive Secretary's recommendation to establish a branch office of ECLA in Mexico, accepting with pleasure the offer of the Government of Mexico to provide facilities for the constitution of that Office, and requesting the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take appropriate measures to facilitate its establishment.
