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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

MEMORANDUM

FROM THE INTER-AMERICAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
TO COMMITTEE 4 OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE ECLA

Subject: Coordination between the ECLA and the
Inter-American Economic and Social Council

The Economic Commission for Latin America, or ECLA, on 23 June 1948 approved a resolution on coordination designed to guide the working relations of the ECLA and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council (hereinafter called the Council), in a joint effort to deal constructively with Latin American economic problems. The provisions of this resolution having now been in operation for almost a year, during which time both bodies have been pursuing their activities, it is fitting to take stock of the experience so far obtained.

From the outset it should be noted that both the ECLA and the Council have had to face situations which could not have been fully anticipated in June 1948. The problems which have arisen are such as to make it impossible to state categorically at the moment whether either of the two organs will be able fully to implement the resolution on coordination.

In its provisional report of 28 January 1949 to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the ECLA referred as follows to the progress made to date in connection with the said resolution.

/“In compliance

"In compliance with the resolution on coordination (E/840) approved at the First Session, the Executive Secretary has been in constant communication with the Director of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Organization of American States. The Executive Secretary believes that as a result of the close collaboration between this Commission and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, there has been no duplication of effort".

The resolution on coordination was partially based on the consideration that "it is essential for the Economic Commission for Latin America to organize its work in order to avoid any prejudicial duplication and to obtain the maximum collaboration with the Inter-American Economic and Social Council as foreseen in paragraph 9 of the terms of reference of the Commission", and in the Tenth Resolution of the Bogota Conference. Paragraph 9 of the terms of reference state that:

"The Commission shall cooperate with and take the necessary measures to coordinate its activities with the appropriate organs of the Inter-American System and as may be necessary with the Caribbean Commission, to avoid any unnecessary duplication of effort between those organs and itself; to this end the Commission is empowered to and shall seek to make working arrangements with the appropriate organs of the Inter-American System regarding the joint or independent study or execution of economic problems within its competence and the fullest exchange of information
/necessary for the

necessary for the coordination of efforts in the economic field. The Commission shall invite the Pan-American Union to nominate a representative to attend meetings of the Commission in a consultative capacity".

In this connection, attention should also be drawn to Resolution X of the Ninth International Conference of American States, which reads as follows:

Considering: that the functions assigned to the Economic Commission for Latin America established by the United Nations Economic and Social Council at its meeting of 25 February 1948, are basically similar to those of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, approved by this Conference:

In order to prevent overlapping in the organization and work of the two organs, the Ninth International Conference of American States, RESOLVES:

- 1.- That the Inter-American Economic and Social Council appoint a Committee of not more than three members, to meet with the Economic Commission for Latin America at Santiago, Chile, in June 1949, to draft an appropriate formula on the working of the two organs and to outline their respective fields of activity and general programmes, including the relations between them designed to avoid any such duplication in their organizations, staff and functions.
- 2.- That the results of this joint meeting be submitted for the approval of the United Nations Economic and

/Social Council

Social Council and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council. Pending such approval any practical study planned by the Economic Commission for Latin America or the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, on organization, staff or substantive work shall be undertaken only after detailed consultation with the aforementioned joint advisory committee.

It should be noted that the text of the above resolution formally recognizes the similitude of functions assigned to ECLA and the Council. "Similitude of functions" does not however mean that such functions can be performed simultaneously by two organs, situated at great distance from each other, unless the efforts of both are designed to achieve periodically interchangeable and conclusive results. Circumstances beyond the control of either organ have raised problems the outcome of which it is more important to consider now than it is to analyse the present apparent absence of duplication. In the last part of this Memorandum, an attempt has been made to define and assess the importance of these problems and outline the points of view of the Council on ways of coordinating activities rather than on principles for delimiting the respective spheres of action.-

The main task of the Secretariat of the ECLA, during its first year, was outlined in the resolution of 23 June 1948 on the Economic Survey of Latin America, which requested the Executive Secretary of the ECLA to undertake a general study of Latin America, "having in mind its needs and greater development, and the strengthening of its economic relations with the rest of the world....."

/In order that

In order that that study should conform in general terms to the Study on the Economic Situation and Prospects of Europe, the Executive Secretary was asked:

- a) "to make a study of the current economic situation in Latin America, specially dealing with agricultural activities, including pastoral, forest and fishery production of both foodstuffs and raw materials; with industrial and mineral production; with power resources; with equipment; with distribution and transportation and with factors affecting the commercial and financial activities of each country;
- b) to analyse ~~trade relations within Latin American and~~ between Latin America and the rest of the world;
- c) to study and present the main characteristics and problems of the economic structure of the Latin American countries".

The resolution of 24 June 1948 on statistics instructed the Executive Secretary of the ECLA to collaborate with the Secretary of the Council in drafting a questionnaire to be sent to Governments, which would serve both for the Buenos Aires Conference and to supply data which could be used by the Executive Secretary in the task entrusted to him.

The resolution thus indicates the areas of collaboration between the ECLA and the Council. Correspondence between the Executive Secretary of the ECLA and the Executive Secretary of the Council, to which the ECLA provisional report refers, included the following interchange of documents since the Santiago session:

From the Council to the ECLA:

- 1.- List of tables submitted for comment (in accordance with the resolution on statistics) before their
/inclusion in

- inclusion in the questionnaires to Governments
(18 August 1948).
- 2.-Copy of each of the questionnaires, including statistical tables, sent to the ECLA by air mail (1 November 1948).
 - 3.-Additional copies of questionnaires for eight countries (sent 29 November 1948 on request)
 - 4.-Copies of report on immigration (7 January 1949)
 - 5.-Letter to the Executive Secretary of the ECLA informing him of the results of the questionnaire to date and indicating that Governments had been requested to submit copies of their replies direct to the ECLA (25 January 1949)
 - 6.-Copy of reports on the Inter-American Bank and the Trade Institute (25 March 1949)

From the ECLA to the Council:

- 1.-Set of documents on results of the June session (10-September 1948).
- 2.-Copies (in Spanish and English) of the Outline for the study of national economies (24 September 1948).
- 3.-Copy of a draft questionnaire on technical assistance (22 December 1948).
- 4.-Letter from the Executive Secretary of the ECLA enclosing the Memorandum on "Type of Questions on the immigration study, to which answers are desired-3 January 1949 (15 January 1949).
- 5.-Letter from the Executive Secretary of the ECLA reporting that a copy of the replies from Bolivia had been received (4 February 1949).

It should also be noted that the ECLA has received technical assistance from certain organs of the United Nations.

Taking as a basis its provisional report of 28 January 1949, this assistance may be itemized as follows:

- 1.- Establishment of a Joint Working Party, in agreement with the FAO, to study "the possibilities of increasing food production in Latin America";
- 2.- Collaboration of the International Monetary Fund in preparing the financial sections of the Economic Survey;
- 3.- Agreement with the ILO that it would send a specialist to Santiago to work with the ECLA in studying problems of vocational training in connection with the report on technical assistance;
- 4.- Agreement with the IRO that it would supply material for the study on immigration in Latin America

The Council is of the opinion that despite the terms of Resolution X of the Ninth International Conference of American States, it is not yet possible to separate the respective fields of activity of the ECLA and the Council. Separation of their two spheres of action may perhaps be possible at a later stage in the development of both organs, but further efforts to that end seem premature at present. Consequently, the Council wishes to express its point of view that just as the ECLA is entitled to continue its own work without limitation, so also the Council will do the same, both organs proceeding in accordance with the instructions issued in their respective cases by the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the Ninth International Conference of American States.

The preceding statement does not imply the exclusion of

/coordination and

coordination and cooperation between the ECLA and the Council. Such coordination and cooperation can and should exist, even though the corresponding spheres of action of each organ are not precisely delimited, and to that end, the Council is of the opinion that coordination and cooperation as a function of the relation between the activities of both organs implies the following reciprocal exchanges:

- a) Communication of general work programmes and even of practical projects for immediate activities. This should be done as soon as the programmes and projects are approved and before the work is initiated. To this end the Council has pleasure in forwarding as annexes to the present Memorandum the immediate work programmes which the Council has approved through its Commissions on financial cooperation, commercial cooperation, social cooperation and technical cooperation.
- b) Information on the results of work at present in progress, as far as is possible, recognizing the sometimes insuperable difficulties in providing information on the partial results of current investigations.
- c) Interchange of information on work already completed and exchange of points of view and remarks thereon, for the purpose of complementing and improving it as far as possible.
- d) Communication of reports received from Governments, recognizing also the limitations imposed in this connection by the confidential nature of the information supplied or the difficulty of providing copies when it is very voluminous. In the latter case, if

additional copies cannot be obtained, Governments are recommended to send the information direct to the ECLA or the Council, as the case may be.

Havana, 6 June 1949.

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