

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CN.12/AC.46/3
25 June 1960

ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Committee of the Whole
Third Extraordinary Session
New York, 28 June 1960

THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN CHILE

Note by the secretariat

60-15652

Chile is one of the Latin American countries whose participation in the activities of the United Nations has been most extensive and steadfast. Ever since the San Francisco Conference initiatives taken by Chile have been decisive in the formulation and execution of new activities in the service of the world organization. The interest and faith which the people and Government of Chile have displayed in the greatest enterprise of co-operation and juridical relationships of modern times is further evidenced by their participation in the activities of international institutions in Santiago and in the work being done abroad with the co-operation of Chilean nationals.

The functions of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in Chile have been steadily increasing since the establishment of the Economic Commission for Latin America in Santiago in 1948. The FAO Regional Office for Latin America has also been established in Santiago and in the same city various regional courses are being given under the sponsorship of the United Nations and the specialized agencies: the Economic Development Training Programme, the Regional Centre for Demographic Training and Research in Latin America, the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences and the Inter-American Centre for Biostatistics.

Chilean support of United Nations activities has also been demonstrated in the Chilean Government's decision to donate the land and other facilities required for the construction of a United Nations building in Santiago which will house ECLA, the office of the Technical Assistance Board, FAO, UNICEF and other institutions connected with the United Nations.

The Governments of States members of ECLA are fully aware of the work which the United Nations has been doing in recent years throughout Latin America and more particularly in Chile. Apart from the Commission's annual reports in which the secretariat's work is set out in detail, the Commission has been informed of the assistance rendered by TAO in the region in the documents submitted at each session. This also applies to the work of the specialized agencies, not only because of its close connexion, in specific programmes and projects, with the activities of the secretariat,

/ but also

but also because of the information which each of these agencies submits periodically to its member Governments. It would therefore be redundant to go into these activities in detail, and it was deemed preferable to confine the present note to the activities being undertaken in 1960 and, more particularly, to those which will derive - if the Commission so decides - from the economic and social consequences for Chile of the cataclysm which has recently befallen it.

Services in 1960

The United Nations Technical Assistance Programme in 1960, formulated by the Chilean Government, includes 47 international experts from six participating organizations. Nearly all the projects are related to Chile's principal economic development programmes, such as the Economic Development Plan drawn up by the Development Corporation (Corporación de Fomento de la Producción - CORFO) for the decade 1960-70, which covers the following aspects: industry, agriculture, mining, transport, energy, public works and communications, and the extensive Government campaign designed to check inflation and promote economic development and administrative reorganization.

The United Nations Bureau of Technical Assistance Operations has sent experts in plastics, transport, energy and fuel economy, mining economy, public administration, railways, ports and coastal shipping.

Eight experts from the International Labour Organisation are taking part in an extensive programme for the vocational training of skilled workers in the construction and clothing industries, which is being carried out in collaboration with the Government programmes for the revival of these industries and as a first step in the implementation of a vast nation-wide vocational training programme which began in 1960.

FAO is continuing to co-operate in land and water utilization, drainage, soil classification, utilization of brackish soils and improvement of productivity and farming methods. There are experts in plant production and protection, production of sunflower-seed oil, fruit-growing, plant diseases, and the storage and transport of fruit for export. As regards animal husbandry, an expert is concerned with improving cattle and sheep strains and has done important work in Chilean Patagonia in addition to preparing an improvement scheme for Easter Island. Another expert is working on dairy plants. An adviser on agronomy is helping to co-ordinate agricultural technical services and to integrate them with over-all economic development programmes. A statistics expert has collaborated in the 1960 /agricultural census.

agricultural census. With respect to fisheries, a technological expert is advising this industry on ways and means of raising output quality. Research on whale biology is also progressing, and an expert on the marketing of fisheries products is co-operating with the Chilean authorities in order to boost exports. As regards forest products, there is one expert engaged in forest control and development and another in the marketing of timber. Lastly, a nutrition specialist is advising on the production of dehydrated foods and is studying existing food industries.

UNESCO technical assistance has been concentrated in 1960 in various Chilean universities in accordance with the aim of improving and reorganizing studies and scientific research through the medium of institutes in the basic disciplines of physics, chemistry, mathematics and biology. A woman consultant on educational methods and examination and test systems continues to collaborate with the University of Chile and the Institute for Educational Research (Instituto de Investigaciones Pedagógicas). A specialist in theoretical physics and an electronics expert will be working with the Universities of Chile and Concepción and the Universidad Católica, and a specialist on the methodology of scientific information will help in the reorganization of their institutes which was already begun very successfully by the University of Concepción in 1959 with the assistance of UNESCO. Experts in industrial chemistry and biology have already taken an active part in this reorganization.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has also assigned an expert to collaborate with the Universities of Chile and Concepción and the Universidad Católica in radiochemical studies in order to assist in guiding the physics institutes and faculties with work programmes involving radioisotopes during the early days of their existence.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development has often mentioned Chile as an outstanding example of the proper application of international credit. This is true of the loans granted for the production

of paper, a commodity which Chile was finally in a position to export from 1958 onwards. The eight loans which have been given to Chile against a Government guarantee and with the technical participation of CORFO amounted to 106,600,000 dollars between 1948 and 1959.

In addition, the Bank sent a special technical assistance mission which, together with FAO, submitted to the Government a survey of Chile's agricultural economy, intended to promote its modernization and improvement, which was used as a basis for the Agriculture and Transport Development Plan (Plan de Desarrollo Agrícola y de Transportes) that is being carried out at present.

The International Monetary Fund has co-operated in the policy of monetary and exchange stabilization launched by the Government and has placed a consultant at the disposal of the Central Bank.

In 1959, the International Finance Corporation invested 1,500,000 dollars in the Chilean firm Carozzi - one of the largest manufacturers of farinaceous products in the world - for the expansion of plant, replacement of equipment and silos, etc., and one million dollars in a new cement plant, to be built at Huachipato near the Compañía de Acero del Pacífico, which will have an initial capacity of 132,000 tons of Portland cement. A further 900,000 dollars will be invested by the Corporation in the Empresa Minera de Mantos Blancos for its copper refinery and smelter at Antofagasta in the north of Chile. This sum was in addition to the 2,200,000 dollars already authorized by the Corporation in 1957.

The interest displayed by the Chilean authorities and people in the Special Fund and Technical Assistance was appreciated by the directors of these two services when they visited Santiago in 1959. Chile has signed the agreement with the Special Fund, which has already approved two of its applications: one for a geological and mining research programme in the northern provinces; and the other for the expansion and improvement of the network of hydrometric and meteorological stations throughout the country, as a basis for electrification, irrigation and meteorological services. Chile has already prepared, or is in process of preparing, other projects on timber industrialization, the development of technological

/instruction in

instruction in the University of Concepción and the evaluation of its fisheries resources through oceanographic research, the training of fishermen, market studies and the development of the fisheries industry as a whole.

International services and the disaster

The Chilean Government had been devoting its attention, manpower and financial resources to the numerous development activities mentioned earlier, in which international experts are co-operating, as part of the master plan for Chile's over-all development, when the country was subjected to the most phenomenal wave of seismic upheavals recorded in America during the present century. Although one month has passed, this cataclysm has apparently not yet spent itself. When the President of the Republic, in his opening address to Congress on 21 May, referred to his policy of economic stabilization and the channelling of the country's resources towards a decent standard of living for the people, and announced that the Development Corporation had completed its ten-year economic development plan for the period 1960-1970, he had to precede his entire statement with a description of the havoc that the earthquake had wrought that very morning.

Without losing its composure, time or resources, Chile faced the catastrophe with fortitude and with plans of action designed to overcome the disaster by a tremendous effort in which the damage caused by the cataclysm (estimated at over 500 million dollars, including the amount needed for the rebuilding of at least 100,000 dwellings for 500,000 persons) has not been allowed to delay any of the plans developed earlier. On the contrary, an attempt is being made to deal with the present situation by deciding what aspects of reconstruction can provide an opportunity not for a return to the status quo but for more rapid progress, as has happened in other continents. The Chilean Government has wished to channel the willing co-operation demonstrated by other countries in this direction and has urged the international institutions not to alter the projects

/it has

it has submitted to the Special United Nations Fund. Moreover, it has instructed the Development Corporation to co-ordinate international assistance through a working committee, whose members include the Executive Secretary of ECLA, whom the Secretary-General has appointed as his special representative for that purpose, the Regional Director of FAO, the Resident Representative of the Technical Assistance Board and of the Special Fund, the local representative of UNICEF, the local representative of OAS and the Director of the United States Operations Mission, together with the planning departments of CORFO, the co-ordinating agency for the work of many national institutions. As soon as circumstances permitted, the secretariat of the Commission approached the Chilean authorities to find out the best way in which it could co-operate most effectively forthwith in order to aid the southern provinces. At the same time it communicated to the Secretary-General a preliminary report on the extent of the disaster and the losses sustained. The exchange of communications with Headquarters led to the decision to ask the Chairman of the Commission and the Governments of its member States whether they agreed to the convening of an emergency session of the Committee of the Whole of the Commission to be held in New York for the purpose of considering what measures of international co-operation might be adopted in view of the disaster which had befallen Chile. Replies were received immediately and were unanimously in favour of the session. The Executive Secretary thereupon issued the relevant invitations.

No sooner had the disaster occurred than United Nations experts offered their services in the various institutions to which they were attached. United Nations specialists in transport co-ordination, railways and telecommunications, and FAO experts in various agricultural and livestock branches, volcanic soils and other subjects co-operated in assessing the damage sustained and in the formulation of rehabilitation and development plans, including those aspects of administration, organization and method that the work ahead would require the various official bodies to undertake. Of particular significance was the presence in Chile of

/the ILO

the ILO mission on the intensive training of skilled workers in the building industry. Projects were immediately outlined for new training courses in masonry, carpentry, plumbing and plastering, which will begin in September 1960 in Concepción and later in Valdivia. The intention is to have three-month training courses for groups of 150 skilled workers whose improved methods will be reflected in a higher output and better quality of housing, the sorest need of the stricken area. CORFO, CORVI and the Chilean Chamber of Construction are co-operating with the Ministry of Labour and the University of Concepción in preparing these plans. An expert in the training of industrial workers sent by ILO arrived on 19 June and proceeded to Concepción, where he will remain this year and next together with the other ILO instructors acting as consultants in training programmes for workers in the steel, coal, and pulp and paper industries and in the harbour installations of Talcahuano, all of them vital to the Concepción area which is highly industrialized and has suffered severely from the disaster.

Moreover, the United Nations Bureau of Technical Assistance Operations has announced that it is sending experts in soil mechanics and the reinforcing of buildings in subsiding areas, requested by the Government as a matter of urgency. FAO has responded favourably to CORFO's request for portable saws to speed up the production of lumber for housing. UNESCO, which sent the Deputy Director of the Regional Centre in the Western Hemisphere, is discussing with local universities, colleges and schools the possibility of providing the equipment and teachers needed to put laboratories, installations and training workshops into operation again.

UNICEF, in consultation with WHO, has recommended the allocation of 275,000 dollars for equipment to prevent epidemics and restore the public health and environmental sanitation services disrupted by the earthquakes and tidal waves.

ECLA and every other United Nations body placed all their experts in Chile at the Government's disposal, and the Executive Secretary took an active part in the co-ordination meetings of CORFO.

/All the

All the projects presented have been pooled in a blanket emergency request for 1960-62 submitted to the United Nations and brought to the attention of the extraordinary session of the ECLA Committee of the Whole which has been called at the instigation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to discuss aid to Chile, a country which sees in technical assistance a possibility of transforming the tragedy of the disaster into a starting-point for a shortcut along the road to over-all development with the help of the United Nations, whose resources Chile has summoned in its faith and confidence in international co-operation.

From the foregoing considerations, as well as from the conclusions reached by the Government of Chile in its report on the situation in the south of the country and on the reconstruction programme in course of preparation (E/CN.12/AC.46/2), it is clearly necessary for the United Nations and its specialized agencies to make a special effort to provide technical assistance. In view of the economic and social repercussions of the disaster that has befallen a third of Chile's entire territory and of its general effects on Chile's situation as a whole, the secretariat considers it essential that an effort of the magnitude described above must be made. Without entering into details of the emergency programme of technical assistance for Chile in 1960-62 - details which it will be incumbent upon the relevant technical organizations to take care of and to analyse - the secretariat considers it to be of primary importance that the Committee of the Whole should make a thorough study of the programme in question and adopt whatever recommendations it may deem necessary for consideration of the matter by the Economic and Social Council at its forthcoming session.