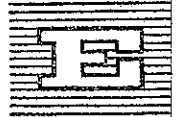


Distr.
GENERAL

E/4781/Add.2
21 July 1970

Original: ENGLISH



Agenda item 27

Dual distribution

REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East

Comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Report on the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East by Mr. S. Ilić, Mr. C.S. Jha and Mr. A.F. Sokirkin, members of the Joint Inspection Unit, and the Secretary-General's observations thereon (E/4781 and Add.1). The three Inspectors visited the area in March 1969, and their report is dated September 1969. It was transmitted to the Advisory Committee in the latter part of January 1970, i.e. after the end of the autumn 1969 session of the Committee; together with the Secretary-General's observations, it was immediately issued to the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with the procedures described in the Advisory Committee's seventh report to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session.^{1/}

2. The report on ECAFE is the second Joint Inspection Unit report on the regional economic commissions. The first such report - which dealt with the Economic Commission for Africa - and the Secretary-General's comments thereon, are discussed separately by the Advisory Committee.^{2/} As the Secretary-General states in paragraph 1 of his comments, the report on ECAFE covers a broad spectrum of the Commission's activities and problems. After a detailed analysis (in Section II of their report) of the growth and evolution of ECAFE, the Inspectors review its internal organization, its relationship with the specialized agencies, with UNDP, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNCTAD, UNIDO and the Office of Technical Co-operation, and the operational role of the Commission; they also discuss certain problems of administration and management.

1/ A/7738.

2/ E/4733 and Add.1 and 2.

3. As regards internal organization (Section III of the report), the Inspectors reach the conclusion that there is an unevenness in the work-load of the various divisions. In their view some of the existing divisions might be reorganized or merged; they feel that some areas (e.g. the Trade Division, the Joint FAO/ECAFE Agricultural Division, and the Research and Planning Division) need strengthening, and they also advocate strengthening the central direction of the Commission's Secretariat, in order to improve internal co-ordination. The Inspectors do not indicate whether, in their opinion, these steps would lead to an overall increase in the size of the staff, or whether they have in mind a re-allocation of posts.
4. The deployment and utilization of manpower resources in all parts of the Secretariat are currently being surveyed by the Administrative Management Service in response to a request made by the General Assembly at its twenty-third session. One regional economic commission (ECA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut have already been surveyed and AMS teams will shortly be dispatched to ECLA and ECAFE. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Inspectors' recommendations in Section III of their report under reference should be brought to the attention of AMS in connexion with its study of ECAFE; the Advisory Committee is confident that the three authors of the inspection report would stand ready to furnish such additional information and clarifications as the AMS may require in connexion with its survey of ECAFE.
5. As regards the question of determining relative priorities in the formulation of the work programme for a given year, to the importance of which the Inspectors rightly draw attention in paragraph 19 (f) of their report, the Advisory Committee has noted from paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's comments that further progress has been made in the desired direction at both the inter-governmental and intra-secretariat levels.
6. In paragraph 19 (g) of their report the Inspectors describe ECAFE's calendar of meetings as "formidable" and suggest that there should be a ceiling for conferences of 180 working days a year. The Committee notes from paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's comments that it is expected that the number of meetings in 1971 will be reduced by at least one-third. The Advisory Committee trusts that the States Members of ECAFE will keep the calendar of the Commission's meetings under constant review and will eliminate those of secondary importance.

ECARFE's accommodation problems, which are described by the Inspectors in paragraph 19 (h) of their paper, were reported by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session.^{3/} By resolution 2616 (XXIV) the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to proceed in accordance with the proposals in his report - namely to prepare in 1970, by means of an architectural and engineering survey, preliminary plans for new construction, and to provide related cost estimates.

8. As regards the Inspectors' recommendation in paragraph 20 that, in the event of new construction, the building should be large enough to provide for common premises for all or most of the regional specialized-agency offices, the Advisory Committee has noted the Secretary-General's observations in paragraph 16 of document E/4781/Add.1 and the views of the specialized agencies, which are included in the Annex to the same document. The Advisory Committee has been informed by the Secretary-General that early in 1970 a study was conducted to establish the requirements of the Commission, including provision for expansion through 1983. As part of that study all United Nations agencies located in Bangkok were consulted. The present projection calls for a new building which would house the offices of the United Nations, UNDP, ILO, IAEA and the WHO Liaison Office (the office of the WHO Representative, which is currently located in the Ministry of Health, is expected to remain there). The existing premises would continue to house ICAO and various United Nations activities. The FAO, UNESCO and UNICEF have or will have separate buildings of their own provided by the Government of Thailand. The Committee looks forward with interest to the report on accommodation at Bangkok to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session, and trusts that it will deal with the various problems to which the Inspectors have drawn attention.

9. In part IV of their report the Inspectors discuss the relations between the regional economic commissions and the specialized agencies, and stress their mutuality of interests. In their words "each can give assistance and support to the other in the achievement of their common tasks and goals, through an integrated approach and without encroachment on each other's activities. It should be the aim to develop to the maximum extent possible such mutual support and liaison, so that United Nations activities as a whole, in any particular region, should be an integrated effort, without overlapping;

^{3/} A/C.5/1264.

multi-dimensional instead of vertical". The Inspectors found that there is much room for improvement as regards inter-agency co-operation in the region; they recommend that effective steps be taken to improve substantially the existing level of co-operation and co-ordination; that agency regional representatives should take a more lively and constructive interest in the studies and deliberations of ECAFE; and that agencies with regional offices at Bangkok should appoint liaison officers to be attached to the divisions of ECAFE which deal with matters related to their fields of competence. The Inspectors also express the view that the different configuration of the regional groupings of individual specialized agencies detracts to some extent from the mutuality of their interests.

10. In their comments, the Executive Heads of ILO, FAO, ICAO and UPU indicate that they had not noticed any adverse effects resulting from differences in the composition of the regional groupings of their respective organizations. These specialized agencies recognize the desirability of more active participation of their agencies in ECAFE meetings, but draw attention to the fact that their manpower resources are limited. As regards UNESCO, the statement in paragraph 1 (c) of the comments by its Director-General that he had noted a growing tendency on the part of the commissions to take up at their meetings matters that are within the competence of the specialized agencies, tends to underline the need for the closer contacts between them that is advocated by the Inspectors.

11. In paragraph 6 of his observations the Secretary-General states that in his opinion "the relationships of the specialized agencies to the regional economic commissions need further study". In this connexion the Advisory Committee would recall that in its observations on the inspection report on the Economic Commission for Africa^{4/} it reached the conclusion that the time had come when the United Nations could usefully review the role of the regional economic commissions in the Second Development Decade and beyond; the entire problem of decentralization policies and their effect on possible duplication with the work of UNCTAD, UNIDO, ESA and the specialized agencies needed to be studied, and the relevant report should be commented upon by all concerned before it was considered by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

^{4/} E/4733/Add.2, para. 28.

12. In Sections V and VI of their report the Inspectors discuss ECAFE's relations with various bodies in the United Nations itself. In their opinion a good working relationship exists between the Commission and UNCTAD. They recommend that the ECAFE Trade Promotion Centre should act as a fully-fledged regional arm of the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre, and that both the regional Centre and the ECAFE Trade Division should be strengthened by the posting of UNCTAD personnel; in his comments the Secretary-General indicates that UNCTAD could not agree to the posting of its staff to ECAFE because of the limited nature of its own resources.
13. As regards UNIDO, the Inspectors' conclusion is that "the existing mutual collaboration appears still to be only marginal". In calling for closer collaboration, the Inspectors recommend that the Industrial and Natural Resources Division of ECAFE should function as the regional arm of UNIDO and as the instrument of achieving co-operation between the Asian Industrial Development Council and UNIDO; they also advocate the secondment, on a tenure basis, of UNIDO personnel to ECAFE and vice versa, and the appointment of a high-level Regional Industrial Officer, whose post might - if necessary - be combined with that of Field Adviser to the UNDP Resident Representative.
14. In his observations the Secretary-General describes the steps taken by UNIDO since the Inspectors' visit to the region to improve co-ordination and co-operation with ECAFE. UNIDO indicates that seven industrial development advisers are now stationed in the area and that, for budgetary reasons, it cannot see the cost-benefit advantages that might accrue from the provision of a further high-level official to ECAFE.
15. In section VI of their report the Inspectors advocate various measures designed to improve co-operation between ECAFE and UNDP and ECAFE and United Nations Headquarters (OTC and Department of Economic and Social Affairs), including increased devolution of authority to the economic commission. The observations of the Secretary-General (E/4781/Add.1, para. 11) and those of UNDP (ibid., para. 12 (a)) show that there is a broad area of agreement as regards the Inspectors' recommendations and that some steps have already been taken. However, as regards the recommendation that some staff should be transferred from Headquarters to the Commission, the Secretary-General expresses the view that "at this stage, it would be preferable to concentrate, as a matter of priority, on the establishment of subregional services so as to provide an additional means of assistance to Governments in planning and programming rather than assistance to ECAFE for project implementation".

16. As stated in paragraph 11 above, the Advisory Committee believes that the relationships between the regional economic commissions and UNCTAD, UNIDO, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the specialized agencies should be covered by the study of decentralization policies recommended by the Advisory Committee in its observations on the Inspection report on ECA. Such a comprehensive study should naturally also encompass the relationships between the commissions and UNDP and OTC.
17. The Inspectors devote section VII of their report to a discussion of the operational role of ECAFE. They state that "after giving due weight" to various considerations, such as "the desirability of extending ECAFE's operational activities, the need to demarcate the operational responsibility of ECAFE and those of specialized agencies; the importance of ECAFE (and other regional commissions) being the principal UN bodies for co-ordinating all United Nations activities in their respective regions; the importance of the country approach; the extent of ECAFE's organizational capacity to undertake extended operational activities of a multi-national character", they are of the view that "subject to an agreed demarcation of spheres of action so as to ensure a right balance of functions and responsibilities, ECAFE, by virtue of its past evolution and experience, has reached the stage when it is ripe for increased operational involvement in projects of regional and sub-regional co-operation".
18. To that end the Inspectors propose that the Commission should, at the request of Governments, initiate, formulate and sponsor multi-national projects for economic co-operation, of whatever nature, and present them on behalf of Governments to UNDP or the other United Nations authorities concerned, as the case may be; that it should act as the executing agency for regional or sub-regional Special Fund projects; that it should assume the co-ordinating role in multi-disciplinary, multi-national regional and sub-regional projects; and that it should act as the initiator and co-ordinator in the case of certain regional and sub-regional projects consisting of component country projects.
19. In their comments, the Executive Heads of several specialized agencies enter serious reservations in respect of those proposals, and draw attention to the possibility that duplication of effort would arise between ECAFE and the agencies.
20. For its part, UNDP has indicated that "there is no objection to the proposed enhancement of ECAFE's role in sponsoring projects at the request of Governments; it is essential, however, that there should be appropriate guarantees that government counterpart obligations will be clearly spelled out from the beginning, and that they will be met.

Judgement must be reserved on the desirability of ECAFE acting as a co-ordinator for the activities of other participating and executing agencies, as this question would have to be considered on the merits of each case on an ad hoc basis and in consultation with the agencies concerned".

21. The Advisory Committee fully agrees with the Inspectors' view that "the essence of efficient co-ordination consists in an appropriately balanced utilization of all the instruments available to the United Nations system". In its comments on the Inspectors' report on the Economic Commission for Africa (E/4733/Add.2) the Advisory Committee discussed the question of the operational role of regional economic commissions with reference to recent decisions of the General Assembly. In paragraph 13 of that report the Advisory Committee stated that that question was exceedingly complex, and that it would appear to the Committee that what was needed was a thorough study of the problem which would enable the Member States to take a comprehensive decision. The Advisory Committee called for a integrated approach, in the absence of which United Nations technical co-operation activities in the regions would be plagued by overlapping and conflicting jurisdictions.

22. The Inspectors also make a number of recommendations on organizational and administrative matters (section VIII). In his comments (E/4781/Add.1, paras. 13 and 14) the Secretary-General states that, while some recommendations do not present any difficulties, others could not be carried out without departing from guidelines set forth by the General Assembly or from practices that are applicable to all parts of the United Nations.

23. As regards the presentation of the budgets of the regional economic commissions, the Advisory Committee would recall that in paragraph 21 of its observations on the inspection report on the Economic Commission for Africa it referred to the over-all study of the form of presentation of the United Nations budget currently under way. The General Assembly's decisions in these matters could affect not only the form of presentation of the budgets of the commissions but also their role in budget formulation and implementation.

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/4781/Add.1
29 January 1970

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (E/4781)

Addendum

Note by the Secretary-General

Attached is the text of a note addressed by the Secretary-General to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

INTRODUCTION

1. The report covers a broad spectrum of ECAFE's activities with some incisive analysis of the problems faced by that commission. As in the case of its report on the Economic Commission for Africa (JIU/REP/68/3), the Joint Inspection Unit's report on ECAFE has underlined the need for and the importance of strengthening ECAFE's role and authority to make it a more effective United Nations instrument for assisting countries in the Asian region in their economic and social development efforts. The Secretary-General shares this view, and he has steadfastly maintained the need for a growing decentralization of United Nations economic and social activities to the regional economic commissions, including their increased role in operational activities. The Secretary-General intends, through every means at his disposal, including the regular biannual meetings of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions as well as the meeting of the senior officials of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, to study carefully, within a comprehensive framework, ways and means of instituting the necessary changes to strengthen the regional economic commissions.
2. The Inspectors' report on ECAFE was circulated to all the United Nations organizations and specialized agencies; their comments on the specific observations and recommendations made in the report are presented in this note.

I. EVOLUTION OF ECAFE AND ITS INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

3. Paragraph 4 of the Inspectors' report indicated that the membership of ECAFE has grown from ten (with six from outside the region) in 1947 to twenty-seven today (with three associate members and seven from outside the region). In actual fact, ECAFE has, at the present time, thirty members, of whom three are associate members, and five are from outside the region.

4. The Inspectors have pointed out the need to improve the methods of determining relative priorities when formulating the work programme for any given year in subparagraph 19 (f) of their report. Since the report was prepared, further progress has been achieved in this respect. A policy and co-ordination office, within the Executive Secretary's Office, has been established, which carries out decisions concerning work programmes in consultation with each division in the ECAFE secretariat. This has resulted in the programmes becoming more action-oriented, with clearer priorities and greater concentration of efforts. In the same subparagraph, the Inspectors have recommended that a Working Group of Experts representing the member Governments of ECAFE should screen ECAFE's work programme prior to its discussion in the Commission (at its annual sessions). In this connexion, it may be noted that since 1968, arrangements have been made so that a special meeting of permanent representatives to ECAFE now takes place a short time before each Commission session for the purpose recommended by the Inspectors.

5. Concerning the Inspectors' observations on the ECAFE calendar of meetings, a special effort is being made, and it is expected that in 1971 the number of meetings will be reduced by one third, or more.

II. ECAFE AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

6. The Secretary-General wishes to record his appreciation to the directors-general and other heads of the specialized agencies for their co-operation in transmitting their comments on the Joint Inspection Unit Report on ECAFE. Comments were received from the ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, ICAO, ITU, IMCO and UPU, and they are presented in the annex to this note. In the opinion of the Secretary-General, the relationships of the specialized agencies to the regional economic commissions need further study in view of the comments and suggestions made in such recent reports as the Capacity Study.^{1/}

1/ A Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System
(United Nations publication, Sales No.: DP/5).

III. ECAFE'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER UNITED NATIONS BODIES

UNCTAD

7. It has always been UNCTAD's policy to seek the closest possible co-operation with the regional economic commissions. However, due to limitation of its resources, it could not agree to the posting of UNCTAD personnel to ECAFE on a tenure basis, but it supports instead more active co-ordination and co-operation between substantive divisions of UNCTAD and ECAFE and between the Trade Promotion Centres in Geneva and Bangkok.

UNIDO

8. The UNIDO has attached great importance to the resolution of problems of co-ordination and co-operation with the regional economic commissions and UNESOB. To this end, it has concluded formal agreements, the first of which was concluded with ECA on 8 November 1968 and the last with ECAFE on 14 July 1969. Following these agreements actions have been initiated to facilitate harmonization of programmes of work to prepare bases for joint action in industry in the regions concerned, and to improve machinery and procedures for co-ordination and co-operation. The subject of co-operation between UNIDO and the regional economic commissions and UNESOB was recently discussed in the meeting of the Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions, held in Geneva in July 1969, and the representatives of the commissions were invited by UNIDO to Vienna for programme discussions in November 1969 when UNIDO would be in the process of finalizing its work programme for 1971. The programme discussions in November 1969 were concerned with the harmonization of work programmes in industry for the next two years and with the details of action required in implementing UNIDO projects in co-operation with the appropriate regional economic commissions. Through these and other measures, UNIDO is in the process of laying the foundation for increased co-operation for the benefit of the developing countries served by the regional economic commissions and UNESOB. The reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on ECA and ECAFE (JIU/REP/65/3 and JIU/REP/69/6, respectively) should be read against this background.

9. It should also be borne in mind that the report on ECAFE, although dated September 1969, was based upon a visit by Inspectors to ECAFE, Bangkok and to two other countries in the region in March 1969. In the period of time that has elapsed since that visit, further strengthening of the relationship between UNIDO and the regional economic commission has occurred, including the conclusion of the agreement mentioned in paragraph 8 above, and the visit of representatives to UNIDO for discussions on programmes of work. It is felt that the Inspectors have underplayed the role of UNIDO in the developments that have taken place in the field of industrialization in the area, and its continuing interest in amplifying and extending its collaboration with ECAFE, which UNIDO regards as the regional arm of the global body in this field of activity. Thus, the origins of the Asian Conference on Industrialization, and the Asian Industrial Development Council, which are permanent sub-organs of ECAFE, may be found in the regional symposium on industrial development organized jointly by ECAFE and

the Centre for Industrial Development of the United Nations Secretariat, which took place in 1965 as the Asian Industrialization Conference. UNIDO is co-operating fully in the preparations now being undertaken for the Second Asian Conference on Industrialization to be held in Tokyo in 1970.

10. Insufficient weight has also been given, it is felt, to the outposting to ECAFE of high-level industrial development advisers, who by the very nature of their work, will create a continuing link between UNIDO and ECAFE in their areas of competence, which were recognized as areas of priority by the regional commission itself. An additional field adviser, who acts as a liaison officer between UNIDO and ECAFE, is also in the field. Since the report was prepared, the programme of work for 1970 has been finalized and, as shown in document ID/B/44, there are some sixteen projects (twelve research projects and four meetings) to be executed in close co-operation with ECAFE. Moreover, UNIDO and ECAFE are collaborating in developing three Special Fund projects. The presence of seven industrial development advisers in the area would seem to give evidence of the continuing and high level of interest of UNIDO in the region served by ECAFE. UNIDO hopes that these officials will be given every opportunity to render a full measure of service to ECAFE and its member countries of the region. At this time, UNIDO, which suffers from budgetary stringencies in common with all other United Nations programmes, cannot see the cost-benefit advantages that might accrue from the provision to ECAFE of a further high-level UNIDO official whose task would be, as suggested by the report, to help to establish a rapport, co-ordination and co-operation between the two bodies.

IV. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

11. Comments of United Nations

Paragraph 5 (1) of section X of the Joint Inspection Unit Report on ECAFE sets out certain recommendations regarding relationships between ECAFE and the Office of Technical Co-operation of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. United Nations views on those recommendations are as follows:

(a) Use of regional advisers - It is suggested that when advisers are not visiting a country or writing a report thereon, they be permitted to work on projects of regional and subregional co-operation. Attention is invited to paragraph 44 of the report under discussion, which acknowledges that advisers are utilized by the regional headquarters in "assisting, as required, in the substantive and administrative aspects of regional seminars, study tours and other regional projects sponsored by the respective economic commissions". This assistance is, of course, rendered between country visits. It is to be wondered, therefore, whether the facility to expand the use of regional advisers does not already exist, and, if not, what further work the Joint Inspection Unit had in mind;

(b) Local cost assessments (12.5 per cent) on regional advisory services - This policy follows that applied to the TA component of UNDP activities. No separate system is used under the Regular Programme. Where a waiver of assessment for the country is agreed to by the Administrator of UNDP, the same waiver holds for the Regular Programme and no charge is made for the assignment of the regional adviser. The assessment on regional projects, of which regional advisers are only a part, is in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 787 (XXX). At its thirty-seventh session, June-July 1964, the then Technical Assistance Committee considered the report of the then Technical Assistance Board on the subject of Local Costs Assessments for Regional Projects (E/TAC/139). ~~The practical difficulties in the application of the provisions of paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 787 (XXX) were set out for the Committee.~~ While recognizing that in the case of regional experts certain practical difficulties would sometimes arise, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that it authorize the then Executive Chairman of TAB, in joint agreement with the Governments participating in regional projects, to apply the provisions of Council resolution 787 (XXX) with a degree of flexibility, provided that the principle of reasonable financial participation of recipient Governments in the costs of such projects, including local living costs of experts, was maintained. This is where the matter rests at this time. The United Nations position in any discussion of the subject has been that local cost assessments should not apply to regional projects;

(c) Approval of cost plans for regional projects by the executive secretary - Under existing arrangements, the cost plans are prepared by the commission secretariats and forwarded to Headquarters for "formal" approval. This procedure is occasioned by the need for OTC to prepare the final submission, including a detailed justification, of the project proposal to UNDP for its consideration and approval. The change, as suggested, could be worked out - if UNDP agrees - and will be pursued;

(d) Possibility of transfer of staff to the commission - At this stage, it would be preferable to concentrate, as a matter of priority, on the establishment of subregional services so as to provide an additional means of assistance to Governments in planning and programming rather than assistance to ECAFE for project implementation.

(e) Consultation with ECAFE - country expert assignments - OTC is currently engaged in developing improved co-ordination with the commission relating to expert assignments to individual countries.

12. Comments of UNDP

The comments of the Administrator set forth below relate to those paragraphs of the Joint Inspection Unit report on ECAFE which are of particular relevance to the UNDP:

(a) Paragraph 56 - The full participation of ECAFE representatives in the Asian regional meetings of UNDP resident representatives is essential. As regards the venue of such meetings, however, a number of factors - among them the need for close co-operation with ECAFE - will need to be considered. From time to time there are other important considerations to be taken into account as well. For instance, the regional meeting of 1969 was held in Manila, specifically because one of the principal purposes of that meeting was co-operation with the Asian Development Bank. It should be noted at the same time that Bangkok was the venue of the other four meetings held so far.

The implication contained in this paragraph that the UNDP treats each country as a totally distinct and separate entity, without due regard to regional needs and capacities, is incorrect. Almost one fifth of UNDP's technical assistance resources is spent on regional projects and there are many major regional and subregional Special Fund projects in Asia as well as elsewhere. In addition, there is a separate division for Asia and the Far East at UNDP headquarters, the existence of which offers clear evidence that the regional aspects of UNDP work are not neglected.

~~There have been increasing consultation and co-operation between UNDP and ECAFE (either direct or through OTC) as borne out by the fact that many of the Inspectors' specific suggestions for improvement in this regard are already common practice;~~

(b) Paragraph 57 - It is noted that the Inspectors are impressed with the range of ECAFE's operational and quasi-operational activities. ECAFE has indeed promoted a number of interesting ideas and projects, and it could be expected that with increasing experience ECAFE will equip itself to play a growing, practical role in operational activities. For the present, it remains for United Nations Headquarters to decide how much responsibility and authority it wishes to delegate to ECAFE in this respect;

(c) Paragraph 58 - There is no objection to the proposed enhancement of ECAFE's role in sponsoring projects at the request of Governments; it is essential, however, that there should be appropriate guarantees that government counterpart obligations will be clearly spelt out from the beginning, and that they will be met.

Judgement must be reserved on the desirability of ECAFE acting as a co-ordinator for the activities of other participating and executing agencies, as this question would have to be considered on the merits of each case on an ad hoc basis and in consultation with the agencies concerned.

(d) Paragraph 59 - In regard to the Inspectors' comments on administrative matters, it should be understood that ~~ECAFE and UNOTC~~ are part of one and the same department. A Special Fund project is based on a tri-partite agreement between three parties: the government(s) concerned, the participating and executing agency (e.g. OTC/ECAFE) and UNDP. The role of each part is clearly defined in the Plan of Operation. The apparent problem of a multiplicity of administrative matters only arises when, as sometimes happens, the established division of responsibility is not respected by the project manager. The UNDP would accept, and has always accepted, such delegation of authority as UNOTC agrees to make to ECAFE on such administrative matters.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

13. Preparation and presentation of budget estimates

Two recommendations contained in paragraph 60 of the Joint Inspection Unit report (paragraphs 6 (a) and (b) of section VIII of the report), relate to the preparation and presentation of the budget estimates of the regional economic commission secretariats:

(a) The first of these suggests that the budgets of the regional economic commissions "should be shown separately, and be easily identifiable, perhaps in the form of an annex to the budget document". This recommendation does not present any difficulties. In fact, the information annex to the budget estimates already contains a presentation, by major activity and by object of expenditure, of the provisions included in the regular budget for each of the regional commissions (see, for example, Schedule V of volume II of the budget estimates for the financial year 1969 2/). This presentation can be further improved upon if necessary;

(b) The second suggestion is that before estimates sent in by ECAFE (and other regional commissions) are finally placed before the Budget Division, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should look into the substantive aspects of these estimates and act as a focal point for co-ordination in the light of varying trends in the different commissions. The Secretary-General welcomes this recommendation, which would be a valuable supplement to the review undertaken by the internal budget-review group.

14. Personnel administration

The Inspectors have made some observations on the application of the principle of geographical distribution and on recruitment procedures for the staff of the Commission. They have also briefly dealt with the working conditions of the staff of the ECAFE:

(a) The Inspectors have noted and approved the present composition of the ECAFE secretariat which includes a high ratio of citizens belonging to member States covered by the commission (76.85 per cent as of 1 January 1969). They have made this statement because they consider that these people "are the best able to understand the problems, mentality and aspirations of the people of the area," and that a similar situation is to be found in the other regional economic commissions. They add, also, that it might be possible to increase somewhat the percentage of staff who do not come from the area. As for the distribution of posts among the nationalities in the region, they propose that we should endeavour to improve it "under the obvious condition that it would be possible to find competent people" (paragraph 62);

(b) The Secretary-General feels, as the Inspectors do, that there is some advantage in having a preponderant percentage of officials from the region but

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 5.

that it is also important that the secretariat of ECAFE as well as of the other regional economic commissions include officials recruited from outside of the region. The Secretary-General also agrees with the suggestions concerning the recruitment of qualified people from the countries within the region,

(c) In paragraph 63 of the report, the Inspectors point out that the Executive Secretary of ECAFE, as well as the executive secretaries of the other commissions, "should be entitled to recruit people for a period of time up to twenty-four months without referring to the Appointment and Promotion Board". Two arguments are provided to support that recommendation. First, the current system, in the view of the Inspectors, entails long delays in recruitment, and secondly, the fact that the Executive Secretary is only entitled to recruit professionals for eleven months prevents the recruitment of qualified people. With due regard to the general opinion of the Inspectors as to the role that the regional economic commissions should play in the field of technical co-operation, it is obvious that the Inspectors feel that a greater degree of decentralization is an essential condition for an efficient functioning of the commissions. The recommendation aiming at broadening the power of the executive secretary in the field of recruitment reflects that general attitude. In a broader context, such a proposal is easy to understand. The experience gained by one of the organizations linked to the United Nations indicates that the decentralization system of recruitment permits the regional offices to be able to satisfy their needs. However, within the United Nations, delegating to one regional economic commission or to an external office the power of recruitment and appointment would make difficult the implementation of the principles set forth by the General Assembly.

According to these principles, the recruitment of most of the professionals and all the high-ranking officials of the secretariat is to be carried out according to precise criteria with a view to guaranteeing equitable geographical distribution. Therefore, the nationality of candidates is taken into account at the time of recruitment, whatever office be intended for the professional or official. If more power in the field of recruitment were to be delegated to the heads of the regional offices, the central control now being exercised would cease to exist. Moreover, following this precedent, one can foresee that similar measures might have to be taken in regard to the other offices of the Secretariat. It is clear that such a delegation of competence is not consistent with the guidelines on recruitment set forth by the General Assembly;

(d) In paragraph 61, the Inspectors recommend that the Secretary-General should submit to certain conditions the recruitment of staff for ECAFE in order to prevent those officials who have gained some experience with the commissions from being transferred to another office of the United Nations or to any other international organization. In making this proposal, the Inspectors note that some skilled officials have abandoned ECAFE for other offices and they explain the continuing brain-drain by the working conditions which, according to them, make Bangkok less attractive than other duty stations. Such a feeling, however, does not seem to be confirmed by the statistics concerning the terminations of service. An analysis of the statistics for the last three years indicates that twenty-five professionals and high-ranking officials have left the commission, which means an annual rate of 8.3 persons. During the same period of time, the rate for the secretariat as a whole was 7.4 persons. Since about half (twelve) of those terminations took place last year, and since four cases were attributable to the expiration of long-term contracts and four other cases to the termination

of fixed-term appointments, it seems difficult to explain those departures by the existence of specific problems in regard to the working conditions in Bangkok. Therefore, and in the absence of more detailed information on that score, it does not seem completely justified to enforce specific rules for the staff of that duty station. It is, perhaps, appropriate to recall also that under the current arrangements among the United Nations organs, transfer of staff members requires the agreement of all parties concerned. The same rule applies also to all transfers which take place within the United Nations. The degree of mobility of staff within the United Nations Secretariat is in any event too limited, not too great.

15. Buildings and facilities

The comments of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning the working conditions and shortage of space in ECAFE (paragraphs 19 (h) and 20 and recommendation 1 (a)) are well taken. There is no question but that immediate action is necessary to rectify the situation. According to a recent study of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, there is a current need for 25,726 square feet of space for existing staff, in order to eliminate the existing overcrowded and hazardous conditions. The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East already is renting some space outside the Sala Santitham and expects to increase its rentals next year. This entire matter was the subject of a report by the Secretary-General to the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, which approved an appropriation of \$US50,000 for an architectural and engineering survey in connexion with the possible construction of a new building in Bangkok. There are however a number of related problems. The first is that Bangkok is technically only the temporary headquarters of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East. Secondly, the General Assembly has stressed the desirability of host Governments providing suitable facilities, and while the Government of Thailand has reacted positively to a proposal to assist in the construction of an extension to the existing building, it considers that the cost should be shared by member States. Last spring, an appeal by the executive secretary to member States of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East for contributions to finance a modest extension received a very limited response.

16. In paragraph 20, the Inspectors stress that new construction should be large enough to include in common premises the offices of other United Nations agencies located in Bangkok. While this position is unquestionably correct, it raises further questions with regard to the financing of a new building. Additionally, it is doubtful that all agencies would be accommodated in common premises since it is understood that the Government of Thailand has already given a building to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and is now constructing a new building for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It may also be noted that while the Government of Thailand seems to hold the position that it has already contributed adequately towards the ECAFE presence in Bangkok, it has nevertheless consistently given the impression that it will contribute its appropriate share towards the cost of a new building. The Secretary-General will report on this matter to the twenty-fifth session, and will also report on the related problem of financing and other arrangements.

ANNEX

ECAFE AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES:
COMMENTS FROM SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

A. International Labour Organisation (ILO)

The ILO's comments with reference to the summary of recommendations to be found on page 38 ff. of the Joint Inspection Unit's report on ECAFE are as follows:

Recommendation 1 (h)

In the last sentence the Inspectors state that the new premises to be built "should be large enough to provide common premises for all or most of the regional agency offices". This corresponds to ILO policy.

Recommendation 2 (a)

The fact that the ILO Regional Co-ordinator's office in Bangkok does not cover some ECAFE countries, as indicated in paragraph 22 of the report, does not detract from the mutuality of interests between the ILO and ECAFE. Indeed, paragraph 23 shows that co-operation does exist and more examples could be quoted.

As regards paragraph 24, the new concepts of programming that are being evolved both by the World Bank and UNDP should provide for the views of all concerned to be taken into account at the programming stage.

Recommendation 2 (b)

~~More active participation of agencies in ECAFE meetings is desirable. This depends to a large extent on the way in which ECAFE organizes the preparation and proceedings of its meetings. More active participation should also be facilitated by recommendation 1 (g) to place a ceiling on meetings and conferences of ECAFE.~~

Recommendation 2 (d)

~~The regional co-ordinator is, in fact, the liaison officer to ECAFE as a whole and it is for him to make the necessary arrangements for liaison with the substantive divisions of ECAFE, according to the subjects dealt with. Arrangements are thus more flexible than the appointment of permanent liaison officers.~~

Recommendation 5 (3) (a)

The ILO is fully prepared to participate in the meetings recommended for UNDP resident representatives and senior officials of ECAFE.

Recommendation 5 (3) (b)

As regards the first sentence, is it not for the administrator of UNDP to decide to what extent ECAFE should be involved in the formulation and appraisal of country requests?

With reference to the second sentence it is not clear what type of expertise ECAFE would bring into evaluation of regional and country projects during their execution.

Recommendation 5 (4) (a), (c) and (d)

Multinational projects (regional or subregional) are normally within the field of competence of one agency, and may in some cases involve the co-operation of other agencies. The ILO has collaborated in the past with ECAFE on this type of project. For example, the ILO's Asian Manpower Plan is supported by ECAFE and there is a close working relationship with the competent ECAFE technical service. However, for implementation of the project itself, the ILO approached other specialized agencies directly and will obtain assistance from experts in fields covered by FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF and possibly WHO. A further organizational "layer" for the formulation of projects, co-ordination of execution of projects etc. appears unnecessary.

It is recalled that the administrator of UNDP is charged with the responsibility of deciding which organizations will be consulted in these matters.

B. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

"At the outset, I wish to express my appreciation of, and to congratulate the authors for, the useful proposals contained in this report. Since I find myself in general agreement with most of the points raised in this report, my comments are mainly directed to those recommendations which I consider worthy of particular emphasis and to those suggestions to which I find some difficulty in lending support.

"In paragraph 22 of the report, attention is drawn to the fact that 'the country-wide composition of the regions in charge of the regional representatives is not identical', and that the different configurations between the agencies are generally at variance with that of the ECAFE region. We ourselves have not noticed any adverse effects resulting from the existing variation, nor do we feel it has impaired the 'mutuality of interests' referred to in paragraph 21 of the report. Experience gained so far would seem to indicate the possibility that such difficulties may be avoided or overcome by means of effective co-ordination both in the field and at the headquarters of the agencies. In any event, this complex question concerning the possible standardization of the country-wide composition of regions, would require consideration by the governing bodies of each of the agencies, and by the United Nations system as a whole. It remains to be seen whether the UNDP Capacity Study will contain specific recommendations on this matter. The points raised in paragraphs 24 and 25 of the report, on the need for agencies to take an active and constructive

interest in the studies and deliberations of ECAFE, are fully in accord with FAO's policy. As you know, FAO has for many years recognized the need for closer co-ordination and co-operation with the regional economic commissions, and special agreements executed with the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions under which joint agriculture divisions located at the headquarters of each of the regional commissions have been established. Joint divisions have been established in all cases, and have proved very useful in maintaining direct regular links. The strengthening of mutual co-operation between FAO and the regional economic commissions is a matter to which I personally attach the greatest importance.

"In paragraph 23 of the report reference is made to a number of instances of co-operation including the interagency collaboration in the execution of the Mekong River Basin Project, which functions under the auspices of ECAFE. You are doubtless aware of the recent decision of the Mekong Committee to set up an agriculture sub-committee, and the request made for UNDP support towards the establishment of an agriculture division within the Mekong Project secretariat. This will ensure even closer links with the project and the ECAFE staff working on it. The Executive Secretary of ECAFE is, of course, aware of FAO's efforts and of its specific proposals for strengthening co-operative activities. Co-operation at the working level has been good in Bangkok and the progress achieved towards a wider understanding of our respective roles is, for me, a source of satisfaction. Incidentally, I believe it is relevant to refer to other examples of particularly successful regional activities between FAO and other regional economic commissions, namely the joint programming of ECA and FAO activities, and lately the West African Rice Development Project, which illustrates the support given by FAO and the mutual co-operation between FAO and ECA in the promotion of this important regional project. In the case of ECLA, there are numerous indications of harmonious and effective collaboration with FAO, particularly in the field of commodities. It would be fair to state that our joint efforts are proving very successful. I have no doubt that, in the light of past experience, truly co-operative action between the various components of the United Nations system will become the generally accepted standard. While we are in broad agreement on the need to strengthen the joint agriculture division with ECAFE, as mentioned in paragraph 26, it is our belief that such strengthening does not necessarily involve additional staff. The role of the division is primarily to identify problems of a regional character in the agricultural field, and to establish the place of agriculture in plans for the over-all economic development of the region. The division has already carried out much useful work in this field and will, in future, have the full and active collaboration of our regional office to which, under our re-organization plans, considerable authority has been delegated. ECAFE would need for its part to stress the importance of the agricultural sector more emphatically than it has done in the past.

"In item (i) of paragraph 58 the Inspectors recommend a new procedure for ECAFE to present to UNDP, on behalf of Governments, multinational projects for economic co-operation of whatever nature. The current procedure is that although international organs help Governments to formulate requests for assistance, it is the Government or group of Governments that makes the request, and agrees to meet counterpart obligations. This procedure helps Governments to establish and maintain priorities at the national level, which is essential to eliminate low-priority projects among competing claims.

"I find myself unable to agree with this particular recommendation. The proposed change in procedure would introduce undesirable problems, including a duplication between ECAFE and the specialized agencies, which we are all trying to avoid. The new procedure suggested by the Inspectors is likely to result in conflicts with regard to specialized activities concerning more than one Government. ECAFE should promote such projects in the light of its own mandate in economic and social development and assessment of the needs of the region, but the sponsoring of any such multinational projects in particular specialized fields should be entrusted to the appropriate specialized agency. This is indeed the guiding principle on which the setting-up of the FAO joint division with ECAFE has been based.

"I would also caution against acceptance of the change of procedure suggested in item (iii) in paragraph 58 of the Inspectors' report. The type of multinational regional or subregional project mentioned against this item really concerns specialized agencies in their specialized sectors. As there could be only one executing agency, with those concerned participating, it would be establishing a further complication if the commission were in such cases given executive responsibility in a co-ordinating role. The designated executing agency should have full operational responsibility and, for the success of the project, should have the co-operation of other agencies concerned.

"The opinions expressed in paragraph 61 of the report raise some questions with which I find it difficult to agree. Sections (b) and (c) in paragraph 50 raise questions which also concern general procedures for all agencies operating under UNDP. I would not, therefore, comment on these issues in this letter."

C. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

1. General remarks

(a) It has always been UNESCO's policy to seek the co-operation of the regional economic commissions in carrying out its regional programmes. For instance, an important part has been played by these commissions in the preparation of the ministerial conferences periodically convened by UNESCO in Africa, Asia and Latin America, in the fields of education and of the application of science and technology to development. It is felt, however, that UNESCO could and should draw more fully than it has to date on the experience, expertise and advice which the commissions can offer in the economic field. The secretariat of UNESCO has therefore been studying ways and means of strengthening its co-operation with them;

(b) To this end, a series of annual joint staff meetings with the Economic Commission for Africa was instituted two years ago, at which the programme of ECA and the programme of UNESCO in Africa are surveyed with a view to increasing by mutual support the efficiency of our respective activities and promoting joint projects. These meetings have proved valuable. With the Economic Commission for Europe, an earlier start was made in the specific field of statistics, with satisfactory results. The Director-General of UNESCO is looking forward to making similar arrangements with the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East and the Economic Commission for Latin America;

(c) The Director-General of UNESCO has noted, however, with concern a growing tendency on the part of the commissions, as indicated by the Enlarged Committee on Programme and Co-ordination (ECPC) at its resumed second session in March 1969, to take up at their meetings matters that are within the competence of the specialized agencies. They tend also to undertake studies and surveys in the agencies' fields of competence, particularly, where UNESCO is concerned, in science and technology. Such trends are regrettable as they can but lead to duplication of effort and overlapping of activities. They should be checked and rectified by maintaining the commissions within their proper terms of reference, which are to raise the level of economic activity and to strengthen the economic relations of the countries in their respective regions. It is on this basis that the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe and the Director-General of UNESCO reached agreement in July 1968, as regards the co-operation of the Commission and of UNESCO in the fields of science and technology. As pointed out in the report of the 1969 annual meeting of the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions, a pattern similar to the one they evolved could be adopted with the other commissions;

(d) These considerations apply to the twofold problem of (i) the transfer to the regional economic commissions of an increasing number of United Nations activities in the economic and social fields, and (ii) the operational role of these bodies. Although the need for such decentralization is appreciated, it is felt that it should be confined to the operational activities of the United Nations itself, without giving to the commissions any co-ordinating role in so far as the specialized agencies are concerned. Such a role does not appear to be in keeping, as inferred by the Enlarged Committee on Programme and Co-ordination at its resumed second session, with the existing constitutional relationships between the United Nations and the specialized agencies and within the United Nations itself.

2. Specific comments regarding the Joint Inspection Unit report on ECAFE

(a) The draft report was transmitted to the secretariat of UNESCO in June 1969 and the preliminary secretariat's comments were sent to the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit on 25 July 1969. Some of these comments were taken into account by the Inspectors in finalizing their report. Certain points have, it is felt, been overlooked and the report still contains assertions or recommendations about which the Director-General of UNESCO must express reservations;

(b) For instance, little account seems to have been taken of the UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok, which serves as a channel for regular collaboration with ECAFE. The latter has taken part in all collective deliberations organized by the Office concerning regional programmes calling for ECAFE co-operation. Conversely, all requests for information or studies made by ECAFE to the regional office, or to specialized regional centres co-ordinated by the office, have been duly met;

(c) The Inspectors recommend that those agencies that have no arrangements similar to those existing between ECAFE and FAO, but do have regional offices in Bangkok, should appoint liaison officers to those divisions of ECAFE which deal with related matters. The secretariat of UNESCO feels that technical

co-operation between the organization and the commissions should be arranged in such a way as to utilize fully the intellectual and material resources of those technical divisions of each partner which deal with matters of joint concern. In order to foster this co-operation, it may be useful to designate a liaison officer when, as in the case of ECA, there is no UNESCO regional office at the site of the commission's headquarters. It is the intention of the Director-General to appoint such an officer in Addis Ababa in 1970. This representation, however, does not appear necessary when the headquarters of the commission and the UNESCO regional office are in the same city and have established close co-operation, as is the case between the UNESCO office in Bangkok and ECAFE;

(d) Finally, for the reasons stated in paragraph 1 (d) above, recommendations in the report according to which ECAFE should be entrusted with co-ordinating functions at the operational level call for serious reservations.

4. World Health Organization (WHO)

~~"I believe that all of us would agree whole-heartedly with the Inspectors that closer collaboration, mutual support and well-established liaison should be developed to the maximum extent possible between the economic commissions and specialized agencies. This strong relationship has been recognized since the inception of the World Health Organization and confirmed in the decisions of its governing organs.~~

"The Agreement between the United Nations and the World Health Organization, whereby the United Nations recognizes the World Health Organization as the specialized agency responsible in the field of health, provides in article XI that: 'Any regional or branch offices which the World Health Organization may establish shall, so far as practicable, be closely associated with such regional or branch offices as the United Nations may establish.' Article XIX of the same Agreement states that:

~~'1. The United Nations and the World Health Organization agree to the foregoing provisions in the belief that they will contribute to the maintenance of effective liaison between the two Organizations. They affirm their intentions of taking whatever further measures may be necessary to make this liaison fully effective.~~

~~'2. The liaison arrangements provided for in the foregoing articles of this Agreement shall apply as far as appropriate to the relations between such branch or regional offices as may be established by the two organizations, as well as between their central headquarters.'~~

The executive board of the World Health Organization in 1963 has also stressed the importance of this relationship in resolution EB31.R49, adopted on the subject of 'decentralization of United Nations economic and social activities'.

"Since 1963 steps have been taken to implement the Board's decision. The Organization has a permanent liaison officer with ECA and its representative in Bangkok has so far been performing this function with ECAFE. However, in view of the increasing importance we attach to closer collaboration with that body, a post of liaison officer with ECAFE was established this year and recruitment action is now underway. It is hoped that such a liaison officer would further promote the existing strong co-operation between the two bodies.

"In addition, close collaboration is maintained with the Asian Development Bank as well as the Asian Institute for Development Planning. The latter, to which a full-time WHO staff member has been assigned for the last five years, served as host for orientation of medical officers in economic and social planning and will also be the host to the forthcoming regional seminar for medical officers in health planning in 1969. Regarding the Inspectors' recommendation for the use of common premises, I would have no objection to the WHO liaison officer to ECAFE, whose function is precisely to ensure effective liaison with that body, being accommodated on its premises. Indeed such a physical location would considerably assist in the day-to-day contact and maintenance of constant relations.

"On the other hand, I would see serious disadvantages to our country representatives being removed from ministries of health in which they work and function more or less as part of the ministries. In this connexion you will recall ACC's views on this subject when it dealt in April 1969 with the Joint Inspection Unit's report, 'Co-ordination and co-operation at the country level'. In its conclusions, the Committee stated that 'ACC in general favours the use of common premises. However, in certain cases the demand for close co-operation between experts and the ministries and institutions in which they work is likely to outweigh the possible advantages of housing all members of the United Nations family in a single building. Moreover, when an organization is already accommodated adequately, there must be clear advantages to justify a change'.

"It is my firm conviction that for WHO representatives to be physically removed from the ministry of health would make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for them to fulfil their duties. The executive board reaffirmed this view at its forty-fourth session in July 1969 in resolution EB44.R22 which inter alia 'concur with the opinion of the Director-General that to be fully effective, WHO country representatives should continue to work in ministries of health in order to carry out the technical responsibilities assigned to them'.

"Regarding the operational role of ECAFE, I certainly welcome the Inspectors' views on 'the need to demarcate the operational responsibilities of ECAFE and those of specialized agencies'.

"Economic commissions possess and can make available to the various related agencies basic economic data and information related to the countries within their regions. However, the extension of their operational role, unless strictly restricted to well-defined projects for economic co-operation, would definitely overlap and possibly conflict with the constitutional roles of the specialized agencies. It is, therefore, felt that assistance to Governments in the formulation and evaluation of project requests in specific fields should remain the responsibility of the agencies concerned.

"The last point upon which I would like to comment relates to the Inspectors' statement in paragraphs 39 and 40. In the latter paragraph the Inspectors state that ECAFE is 'responsible to the member States of the region and is subject to their parliamentary control and guidance in policy matters', and concludes 'it is this dual position which gives ECAFE and indeed the other regional commissions a unique status and primacy among regional bodies of the United Nations family - a uniqueness which must be recognized'.

"I would recall that WHO, alone among the specialized agencies, under its Constitution has regional organizations (which are integral parts of the Organization) composed of a regional committee and a regional office. The regional committees are composed of representatives of the member States and Associate Members in the region concerned; their functions as outlined in article 50 of the Constitution of WHO are:

'(a) To formulate policies governing matters of an exclusively regional character;

'(b) To supervise the activities of the regional office;

'(c) To suggest to the regional office the calling of technical conferences and such additional work or investigation in health matters as in the opinion of the regional committee would promote the objective of the Organization within the region;

'(d) To co-operate with the respective regional committees of the United Nations and with those of other specialized agencies and with other regional international organizations having interests in common with the Organization;

'(e) To tender advice, through the Director-General, to the Organization on international health matters which have wider than regional significance;

'(f) To recommend additional regional appropriations by the Governments of the respective regions if the proportion of the central budget of the Organization allotted to that region is insufficient for the carrying-out of the regional functions;

'(g) Such other functions as may be delegated to the regional committee by the Health Assembly, the Board or the Director-General.'

The authority delegated to the regional directors includes inter alia, the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes carried out in each region; they also act as my representative at regional committee meetings. Under article 50 (g) I have also delegated to the regional committees certain responsibility and authority for the development of regional programmes and budgets for incorporation in my annually proposed programme and budget."

E. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

"My first comment is a general one. I understand that the regional representative of ICAO stationed in Bangkok met the Inspectors at a luncheon there. However, no inquiries were made about ICAO's activities in Asia and the Far East or about the role of the Bangkok office in particular. Nevertheless, I note that, in paragraphs 21 to 28, ICAO is named among other specialized agencies; and that some conclusions about the relations between the specialized agencies and ECAFE have been drawn. I believe that some discussion on the spot might well have led to a better understanding of what is involved in the ICAO concept of 'regions', and of the way in which States are grouped for purposes of representation--at least a better understanding than is likely to be conveyed by a brief text.

"My comments on the relevant paragraphs of the report follow:

"Paragraph 21 - It is my understanding that the terms of reference of the regional economic commissions include inland transport, as defined by the United Nations about the time of the establishment of the first three. ICAO's terms of reference cover international civil aviation, of which air transport is part.

"Paragraph 22 - The 'regions' of ICAO are not regions in the sense in which the term is used in the United Nations and some other organizations. The full term is 'air navigation region'. The extent of an air navigation region is not determined according to an arbitrary 'concept', nor simply for 'convenience'. Distance and terrain and other factors dictate the boundary of a region within which a coherent plan for air navigation services may be established. The best illustration of why an air navigation region cannot be considered in the same context as other 'regions' is the case of an oceanic air navigation region, in which the States of the region are those on the opposite coasts of continents - groups of States separated by some thousands of miles of sea.

"The work involved in the review, and in the implementation of regional air navigation plans is, among the functions of ICAO regional offices, important. The nature of the air navigation regions has, therefore, had an influence in determining the sites of ICAO's regional offices, as well as other factors, such as ease of access to States. However, in the case of ECAFE and the ICAO Far East and Pacific office in Bangkok, let us look at the facts. Of the twenty-three Asian and Australasian States and associate members of ECAFE, there are only four to which the ICAO representative in Bangkok is not accredited. These are Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, all lying at the remote north-western limit of ECAFE's region; and Mongolia, which is not a member of ICAO. As far as concerns the ECAFE States lying outside its boundary but having dependent territories therein - the ICAO representative is accredited to the authorities in these territories. Since, in addition to this, the six ICAO regional offices maintain a system of correspondence whereby each has ready access to any State to which another office is accredited, for practical reasons to do with their main function, it seems to me that there will be few if any occasions when the ICAO representative will find any difficulty in joining with ECAFE in any appropriate activity.

"Paragraph 23 - No comments.

"Paragraph 24 - Both ICAO headquarters and the ICAO office in Bangkok are concerned in co-operation with ECAFE in certain matters - in, for example, the promotion of facilitation of transport. The information and advice available in both places has been put at the disposal of the Asian Development Bank for the purpose of the current survey of the need for investment in transport services in the area. I find it difficult to conceive what would be involved in 'systematic collaboration... in the field of programming'. I would have welcomed some illustration of what ought to be done, and would have been interested in any examples of failure to do it. .

"Paragraph 25 - ICAO's practice is to attend meetings of other international organizations only under the following conditions:

"(a) That the meeting is to deal with something which affects, or is affected by, ICAO's activities;

"(b) That ICAO can learn something of interest by sending a representative to attend;

"(c) That, by the same means, ICAO can make a useful contribution to the business of the meeting.

"The task of continual representation at ECAFE meetings would be beyond the present staff of the ICAO office, and would call, therefore, for the provisions of additional staff. I fail to see any justification for this in terms of what ICAO could contribute to work on subjects which have no connexion with transport in general, let alone air transport. If measures for regional co-operation involve civil aviation, ICAO will play its part; and I am satisfied that the ready and easy means of access by ECAFE to the ICAO office, and vice versa, will enable all parties to be fully informed in good time of any need to consider measures of the kind. ICAO normally attends the principal sessions of the commission, and has also attended some meetings of resident representatives of UNDP. I would have been interested to receive an example of failure of an ICAO representative at an ECAFE meeting to make an effective or constructive intervention at the appropriate time.

"Paragraphs 26, 27 and 28 - I believe that the easy means of collaboration between ECAFE and ICAO that exist because of the common site of the ECAFE and ICAO offices, are sufficient for present purposes. If it were claimed in the future that the amount of work to be done jointly justified a permanent joint unit, this would be considered. I await evidence that this is so.

"Summary

"In summary: the ICAO regional offices were not created merely for a convenient administrative decentralization of ICAO's work. For the important part of their work that has to do with air navigation services, it is purely regional in character - but necessarily by air navigation region. This has inevitably an influence upon their sites and upon the grouping of the States to which they are accredited.

"So far, with ECAFE, a common interest has been discovered in certain subjects - facilitation of traffic, telecommunications, tourism are the prime examples. ECAFE's interest is general. ICAO's interest in them depends upon the extent to which they affect or are affected by measures which ICAO must take for the development of air transport. In these matters, there is systematic collaboration, by which we seek mutual support, by, for example, participation in ECAFE meetings dealing with these subjects. The evidence available of collaboration of this kind will, I think, show that our efforts are integrated and that duplication has been avoided. I have no reason to doubt that the executive secretary of the ECAFE shares this view; and, therefore, sufficient reason to believe that the present arrangements for collaboration and co-ordination are efficient and adequate."

F. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

"I would first like to say that the mutual interest of ITU and ECAFE in close co-operation stems from the very fact that the development of telecommunications is a necessary ancillary to economic development in general and, as it is rightly indicated in chapter IV of the report, a continuous and fruitful co-operation between ECAFE and ITU is already firmly established through the joint ITU/ECAFE Unit, which is attached to the transport and communications division of ECAFE.

"One of the recent results of this co-operation is the preparation of the Special Fund Preinvestment Study Project REG-164, already approved by the governing council of the UNDP. At the present time twelve countries of the ECAFE region participate in the project and there is every reason to believe that its implementation will contribute substantially to the development of the region. The project is scheduled to commence operations early in 1970 and the preparations for commencement are made in very close collaboration between ITU and ECAFE.

"Another example of fruitful co-operation is the programming and conducting of ITU seminars in the region. In February 1969 a seminar for high-level participants from telecommunication administrations was held immediately after the first meeting of the telecommunications sub-committee of ECAFE and many of the members of countries' delegations to that meeting participated.

"Two ITU seminars are now planned for 1970 and the preparations are made in co-operation with ECAFE. One of these seminars is dedicated to broadcasting techniques and it is being prepared in co-operation with ECAFE and with the Asian Broadcasting Union.

"Referring now to the suggestions put forward in chapter VII of the report under comment, you will find that my observations given below are basically similar to the remarks I have made above concerning ECA. My views are as follows:

"While in general we support the suggestion about the extension of the operational role of ECAFE in multinational projects of economic co-operation, we think it necessary to indicate that as far as the development of telecommunications is concerned, the preparation and formulation of Special Fund projects of regional character, require much specialized knowledge and, in the case of preinvestment studies, are so closely connected with the work of the ITU specialized committees that it would not be possible to consider any other way of preparing the projects than that which was used in respect to the REG-164, that ITU prepares the project and presents it to UNDP with ECAFE closely co-operating through the joint ITU/ECAFE Unit, in particular by obtaining the Governments' agreement to the project."

G. Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO)

"These comments apply solely to section IV of the report headed 'ECAFE and the specialized agencies'.

"In order to dispel any misunderstandings that certain remarks contained in this section of the report might cause if they were applied to the relations between IMCO and ECAFE, I am happy to be able to assure you that these relations are excellent and very fruitful. It is true that IMCO has no representation, either at regional or national level. However, within the terms of an agreement between the Executive Secretary of ECAFE and the Secretary-General of IMCO, liaison officers have been appointed permanently within the two secretariats to deal with problems of common interest to the two organs in the scope of their respective competence. This agreement has already yielded very encouraging results.

"The survey on the difficulties experienced by developing countries in the application of the international maritime conventions and in dealing with maritime problems of a technical nature, which is at present being conducted throughout the world and, in particular, in this region, by an IMCO consultant should do much to strengthen even more this co-operation.

~~"IMCO participates in the meetings, seminars and conferences organized by ECAFE, within the limits of its budgetary provisions. Moreover, when, for lack of funds, it is unable to send a representative it never fails to offer its co-operation in the form of a statement or documentation, as was the case for the Seminar on Ports in Singapore in October 1968.~~

~~"It is a pleasure for me, furthermore, to emphasize the sympathy and support with which IMCO has always met in its relations with ECAFE. The executive secretary and his staff spare no effort to facilitate and bring to fruition IMCO's relations with the countries of the region.~~

"For our part, we have already taken, and are always prepared to take, in close co-operation with ECAFE, any initiative or action in order to supply the countries of the region with the assistance they require in our various fields of competence."

H. Universal Postal Union (UPU)

"While on a mission at Bangkok, a UPU expert requested the postal administration of Thailand to obtain the assistance of an ECAFE adviser, a transport expert, to study questions of routing in conjunction with the general problem of transport in Thailand. It should be noted in this connexion that postal problems are not included in the work programme of the commission's transport and communications committee.

"With regard to participation in meetings of ECAFE, UPU has been unable to take part in the past for budgetary reasons. It will certainly request the director of the Bangkok Postal Training Centre project, who will shortly be taking up his post, to participate in these meetings whenever possible and to report on any decisions that might be of interest to the Union.

"The director of the Bangkok Training Centre project will thus serve as a liaison officer between ECAFE and UPU.

"The specialized agencies are seeking, each in its own sphere, coherent solutions to the problems that exist in the various regions of the world. Too much regionalization of technical assistance activities may lead to a fragmentation of resources and impair the rational co-ordination which the technical organizations are trying to achieve.

"Where regional or multinational projects of the two components of UNDP are concerned, UPU, as an executing agency for programmes, is in a position unlike that of the other agencies, in that the projects are generally submitted to it under the auspices of groups of countries forming restricted postal unions. The secretariats of these unions draw up the projects in co-operation with the international bureau of UPU. A copy of each project, accompanied by the Government's commitment, is submitted to UNDP through the resident representative in each of the countries participating in the project. The secretariats of these highly specialized restricted postal unions are extremely well-informed about the situation of the postal services in relation to the general economy in the regions concerned. They are the link between UPU and the postal administrations of member States, since they take an active part in the execution of projects. This being so, it will be difficult to avoid overlapping and duplication if the regional economic commissions were to be given the role of executing agencies for regional or multinational technical assistance programmes in the postal field.

"Apart from the question of specialization in the case of UPU, there is another important factor to be borne in mind, namely, that the territorial jurisdiction of our restricted unions is quite different from that of the economic commissions.

"Nevertheless, the Universal Postal Union is quite prepared to seek the help of the economic commissions in connexion with seminars, with regard to talks on subjects which are the speciality of the regional advisers."