

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

REPORT ON THE TENTH SESSION
(7 - 11 May 1983)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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INTRODUCTION

1. This report covers the period since the ninth session. It was adopted by the Commission at its seventh meeting, held on 11 May 1983, in the form as amended during the discussion.

I. ISSUES CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION

2. At its seventh meeting, held on 11 May 1983, the Commission decided to bring the following resolutions to the attention of the Economic and Social Council:

115(X) Programme of work and priorities for the period
1984-1985 ^{1/}

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 37/234 adopting the United Nations medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 as the principal policy directive of the United Nations,

Recalling further its resolution 114(IX) adopting ECWA's medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989,

1. Adopts the Report of the Standing Committee for the Programme on the programme of work and priorities for the period 1984-1985 (E/ECWA/167/Add.1/Rev.1) and the recommendations contained therein;

2. Endorses the programme of work and priorities for the period 1984-1985 as approved by the Standing Committee for the Programme;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary to report to its eleventh session the decisions of the legislative organs of the United Nations with respect to the ECWA programme of work and priorities for the period 1984-1985;

4. Requests further the Standing Committee for the Programme to report to the eleventh session of the Commission the status of the implementation of its recommendations.

7th meeting

11 May 1983

^{1/} See paras. 82-83 below for the discussion leading to the adoption of this resolution.

116(X) Staff and administration questions 1/

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Considering the note by the Executive Secretary on the retrospect and perspective of the Commission's work contained in document E/ECWA/161,

Agreeing with the content of that note concerning the administrative constraints encountered by the secretariat in dealing with issues which limit or impede the discharge of its functions,

Reaffirming the need to strengthen the role of ECWA as an instrument for co-operation and regional integration in a manner consistent with General Assembly resolution 32/197 on restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system,

Emphasizing that the discharge by the secretariat of its functions of preparing and servicing meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, carrying out research in connection with economic problems in the ECWA region, preparing studies and reports requested by the Commission and maintaining contacts with the Governments of member countries requires a full staffing level appropriate to the needs and circumstances of the region in which the Commission is functioning,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the Executive Secretary to ensure that competent staff members from all members of the Commission are appointed to the ECWA secretariat,

1. Recommends that vacant posts be filled by qualified and experienced staff thoroughly acquainted with the situation and circumstances of the region in which the Commission is functioning;

2. Recommends further that at least 75 per cent of the vacant posts be filled by nationals of its member States, as applied in other regional economic commissions;

1/ This resolution was adopted following discussion of agenda item 6. See paras. 42-43 in chapter III of this report.

3. Urges member States which are unrepresented or under-represented to endeavour to second for fixed-term periods to the Commission's secretariat competent candidates and in the event of the non-availability of such candidates, to examine the possibility of temporarily relinquishing their quota for the next two bienniums in favour of other member countries;

4. Requests the Economic and Social Council to propose to the General Assembly that the Palestine Liberation Organization be assigned a quota of posts in the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia in its capacity as a full member of the Commission.

7th meeting

11 May 1983

117(X) International assistance to the earthquake-stricken area of Yemen 1/

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Noting with deep regret the extensive loss of human life and property and the awesome destruction of homes, utilities, infrastructures, crops and animal wealth caused by the earthquake disaster that struck the Governorate of Dhamar and the surrounding areas in Yemen in December 1982 and thereafter,

Noting with appreciation the assistance provided by member and non-member States of the Commission and by international, regional and national institutions and organizations in relief aid for victims of the earthquakes,

Noting further with appreciation General Assembly resolution 37/166 of 17 December 1982 which inter alia, requests United Nations organizations and programmes, including the Economic Commission for Western Asia, to maintain and expand their programmes of assistance to Yemen and to co-operate closely with the Secretary-General in organizing an effective programme of assistance to that country for relief efforts, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas,

1/ See paras. 68-76 below for the discussion leading to this resolution.

Expresses its satisfaction at the efforts exerted by the joint mission conducted by the Economic Commission for Western Asia, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the World Bank and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) in preparing the report that contained a preliminary programme for the reconstruction of the earthquake-stricken areas in Yemen,

Having taken note of the specialized studies presented by international and regional organizations, particularly the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) the World Food Programme (UN/FAO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),

Also expressing its satisfaction at the efforts exerted by the Government of Yemen in providing relief aid for the victims, in supplying funds from its own resources for the work programme for the reconstruction of the affected areas and in taking effective measures for reconstruction and the foundation of a number of new villages in the affected areas,

Believing the magnitude of the disaster to be on such a scale that development efforts and prospects would be adversely affected thereby,

1. Expresses its gratitude and appreciation to the peoples, Governments and organizations of Arab and Islamic countries and to other members of the international community, as well as to the international and regional institutions and organizations that offered substantial relief aid to the earthquake victims;

2. Appeals to all Member States of the United Nations system and to international, regional and national organizations, institutions and funds to contribute generously to the provision of the necessary financial and technical support for the implementation of the reconstruction and rehabilitation programme in the earthquake-stricken areas of Yemen;

3. Urges the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia to continue, within the limits of its capabilities and resources, the follow-up of the implementation of the reconstruction and rehabilitation programme;

4. Requests the Executive Secretary to follow-up the implementation of this resolution and to submit a report therein to the eleventh session of the Commission.

7th meeting

11 May 1983

118(X) The programme of action in favour of the least developed countries 1/

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling its resolution 16(II) on a programme of action in favour of the least developed countries of the region, paragraph 2 of which urged the Executive Secretary to continue his efforts to provide additional services and activities to promote the economic and social development process in those countries,

Also recalling its resolution 100(VIII), paragraph 2 of which requested the Executive Secretary to intensify the Commission's activities with regard to the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action at the regional level, in the light of the results of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held at Paris on 14 December 1981,

Also recalling General Assembly resolution 36/194 of 17 December 1981 endorsing the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries which was adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 37/224 of 20 December 1982 on the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action which, inter alia, calls upon all Member States and all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to take immediate, concrete and fully adequate measures and steps to accelerate the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries,

Noting with deep regret that development problems in the least developed countries of the region have been aggravated as a result of the natural disasters with which they were afflicted, particularly in 1982, and that their need for support from the international community is greater than ever before,

1. Affirms the need for the secretariat to endeavour, within the limits of its resources and capabilities, to implement as far as possible the Substantial New Programme of Action for the least developed countries in the region;

2. Calls upon the secretariat to focus its advisory activities to the greatest possible extent on the least developed countries of the region, to utilize its resources to strengthen infrastructures and to expand training opportunities therein and to plan, monitor and implement joint ventures between those countries;

1/ See paras. 97-98 below for the discussion leading to the adoption of this resolution.

3. Believes that the secretariat should diligently seek to explain and support the needs and requirements for development and for the implementation of development plans in the two least developed countries of the region in international forums and meetings which it attends and in the studies and reports which it prepares or helps to prepare for submission and should accord priority to those countries in the joint programmes proposed and implemented by the secretariat;

4. Urges States Members of the United Nations and, in particular, the member States of the Commission to support, bolster and strengthen the secretariat's ability to implement the provisions of this resolution;

5. Requests the Executive Secretary to follow-up this resolution and to submit a report thereon to the eleventh session of the Commission.

7th meeting

11 May 1983

II. WORK OF THE COMMISSION SINCE THE NINTH SESSION

A. Activities of subsidiary bodies

3. The Standing Committee for the Programme, which was established under ECWA resolution 114(IX) and endorsed under the Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/64, held its first session from 7-10 May 1983 at Baghdad.

4. The Committee discussed the programme of work and priorities of the Commission for the 1984-1985 biennium. It adopted four resolutions pertaining to the Commission's programme of work and priorities and one recommendation addressed to the tenth session of the Commission regarding the endorsement of the programme of work and priorities for the period 1984-1985 (for the report of the Standing Committee for the Programme see document E/ECWA/167/Add.1/Rev.1).

B. Other activities

5. For information on the other activities of the Commission during the period under review reference should be made to documents E/ECWA/162, E/ECWA/162/Add.1, E/ECWA/162/Add.2, E/ECWA/163, E/ECWA/164, E/ECWA/165 and E/ECWA/166.

C. Relations with specialized agencies and other organizations

6. In planning and implementing its activities, the secretariat maintained close co-operation and received assistance from various United Nations specialized agencies and organizations such as FAO, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), UNCTAD, United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA and UNIDO.

7. In the field of agriculture, and within the context of the agreement with FAO regarding the joint ECWA/FAO Agriculture Division, areas of co-operation with FAO included agricultural planning and adjustment, food security and rural development. FAO provided a data series and substantial support for the publication of the bulletin Agriculture and Development in Western Asia; fielded a joint mission to Yemen to prepare proposals for a number of food security projects; and provided it substantial support for the preparation and implementation of studies on rural poverty alleviation as well as evaluation of rural development project performance, and state farming. ECWA also held consultations with FAO on the detailed formulation of and co-operation in future work plans.

8. In the field of industry, and within the context of the agreement with UNIDO, the joint ECWA/UNIDO Industry Division continued the implementation of its ongoing programme of in-depth country studies in close co-operation with UNIDO, under the programme element entitled "Review and appraisal of industrial development and potential." UNIDO was also one of the co-sponsors of the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Petrochemicals held in Kuwait in January 1982.

9. ECWA maintained close working relations with UNCTAD, especially in the area of follow-up activities on the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries (SNPA), whereby ECWA participated in the First Inter-Agency Consultation on the follow-up of the SNPA which was held in Geneva from 24 to 28 May 1982 under the auspices of UNCTAD. ECWA also undertook a mission to Geneva to discuss the long-term modelling and forecasting exercise currently under way, and to co-ordinate activities in that field with UNCTAD. Negotiations were pursued concerning possible joint implementation with UNCTAD and UNDP of the TRAINMAR project for training development in the field of maritime transport, and for the possible establishment of a joint project on a maritime information system.

10. During the period under review, the Commission continued to receive financial assistance from UNEP for the operation of the secretariat's Environmental Co-ordination Unit. ECWA and UNEP also held a Joint Programming Meeting to examine possibilities of co-operation in specific projects and the possibility of incorporating environmental components in various activities of the ECWA programme of work and priorities.

11. UNFPA continued to be instrumental in the implementation of the Commission's population programme, which to a large extent depends on the Fund for financing. The Commission also executed a number of technical co-operation projects financed by UNFPA.

12. Relations with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) continued to be developed in view of the fund provided by Habitat for some posts in ECWA within the environment programme. Consultations were conducted for the purpose of co-ordinating human settlements activities.

13. In accordance with the agreement concluded with the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, the secretariat maintained close co-operation and consultations with the Centre in the formulation and implementation of the Commission's programme in that field. Co-operation between the Centre and ECWA covered inter alia the following areas: information on laws, regulations and policies relating to transnational corporations; and substantive contributions to the CTC Reporter on transnational corporations in Western Asia, and the operations of transnational shipping enterprises in the ECWA region.

14. During the past year, the secretariat continued to work closely with the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs on issues affecting specific population groups such as women, youth and the aging.

15. In the area of science and technology, the ECWA secretariat's relations with the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development (UNFSSTD) continued to be strengthened especially with regard to the joint ECWA/UNFSSTD regional training programme for development of industrial and technological capabilities in petroleum-based industries, and in this context the joint ECWA/UNIDO Industry Division and UNFSSTD organized a workshop on Technology and Process Design Update from 30 October to 2 December 1982 in Amman, and convened a Symposium on Plastics Technologies and Applications from 11 to 15 December 1982. Throughout the implementation of the work programme, the secretariat maintained close links with the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology whereby input was provided by ECWA for publications of the Centre.

16. In the field of natural resources, close co-operation was maintained with UNDP for the review of activities regarding the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade in the ECWA region. Close working relations and co-operation were also kept up with the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy whereby ECWA took an active part in the meeting of the ACC Task Force on the Follow-up to the Nairobi Programme of Action which met in Geneva in March 1982, and participated in the work of the Interim Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy which convened in Rome in June 1982.

17. The secretariat of the Commission, being the executing agency for a number of regional co-operation projects, continued to strengthen its relations with UNDP during the period under review.

III. TENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

A. Attendance and organization of work

18. The tenth session of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) was held at its permanent headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, from 7 to 11 May 1983. Its deliberations covered seven meetings.

19. The session was attended by representatives of the following members of the Commission^{1/}: Bahrain, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

20. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attended the session: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; International Labour Organisation; International Monetary Fund; International Telecommunication Union; International Trade Centre; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Secretariat (New York); World Health Organization.

21. The following regional and inter-governmental organizations attended the session as observers: Arab Federation for Engineering Industries; Arab Federation for Food Industries; Arab Federation for Telecommunications; Arab Industrial Development Organization; Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics; Arab Labour Organisation; Arab Monetary Fund; Arab Organization for Administrative Sciences; Arab Organization for Agricultural Development; Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science; Arab Union of Fish Producers; Arab Federation for Shipping; Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development; International Labour Organisation; Iraqi Fund for External Development; League of Arab States.

22. The Commission adopted the proposals contained in document E/ECWA/159/Rev.2 (as amended) for the organization of its work and entrusted the Chairman, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, with the organization of the schedule of meetings and the sequence in which agenda items would be considered.

^{1/} For the names of participants in the session, see document E/ECWA/INF.34/Rev.3.

23. By virtue of article 4 of the Commission's terms of reference, the following States Members of the United Nations: Algeria; Belgium; Czechoslovakia; France; Germany, Federal Republic of; Hungary; India; Japan; Morocco; Netherlands; Philippines; Sweden; Tunisia; Turkey; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; and United States of America participated in a consultative capacity in the work of the tenth session. Switzerland also participated in the meetings in the same capacity.

24. At its first meeting, the Commission unanimously elected His Excellency Mr. Walid Asfour, Minister of Industry and Trade of Jordan, as Chairman of the tenth session. His Excellency Mr. Haidar Abu Bakr Al-Attas, Minister of Construction of Democratic Yemen and Mr. Ali Hassan Khalaf, Director of the Department of Economic Affairs of Qatar, as Vice-Chairmen; and Mr. Hammam Radi Al Shama'a, Chief of the Multilateral Economic Relations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, as Rapporteur for the session.

25. In accordance with rule 11 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Commission, the officers of the Commission examined the credentials of representatives to the session and found them to be in order.

B. Agenda

26. At its first meeting, the Commission approved the agenda contained in document E/ECWA/158 which it adopted as follows:

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Organization of work
5. Invitation of States Members of the United Nations not members of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in the tenth session of the Commission
6. Retrospect and perspective of the Commission's work
7. Report on the activities of the Commission
 - (a) Progress made in the implementation of the work programme
 - (b) Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission
 - (c) Follow-up action on the implementation of ECWA resolution 107(IX) on international assistance to the flood-stricken areas of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen
 - (d) Earthquakes in Yemen
 - (e) Follow-up action on the implementation of ECWA resolution 27(III) on the general study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people

8. Programme of work and priorities for 1984-1985 and report of the Standing Committee for the Programme
9. Follow-up action at the regional level on the United Nations world conferences and ECWA regional meetings
10. The financial status of the Commission's programmes
11. Co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations
12. Other business
13. Adoption of the Commission's report on its tenth session

C. Account of proceedings

27. The session was opened by His Excellency Mr. Taha Yassine Ramadan, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, who on behalf of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Iraq, welcomed the holding of the tenth session of the Commission at its permanent headquarters in Baghdad. He hoped that the Commission's work would achieve the desired objectives. He then spoke about the international economic situation in which there was a severe crisis unprecedented in contemporary history. The world economy was characterized by slower growth in the industrial countries, spiralling inflation in prices, depreciation in the real value of exports from developing countries, deficits in their balance of payments, an alarming aggravation of the debt-servicing crisis and an increased protectionist tendency on the part of the industrialized countries, all of which had led to a decrease in the volume of international trade in recent years. He made reference to the direct impact of that crisis on economic development and progress in developing countries, including the countries of the ECWA region, which was reflected in the deteriorating situation of the oil market, the drop in oil prices, the production glut and the impossibility of remedying the situation in such a way as to safeguard the interests of the oil-producing countries. He added that Iraq had followed and was continuing to follow a clearly-defined policy on the question of oil energy based on the principles of rationalization of consumption and a balanced pricing and supply policy within the context of a long-term strategy for the supply of oil energy in accordance with the needs of both consumers and producers. He emphasized that Iraq, for its part, had supported the resolutions and recommendations of the United Nations in the economic sphere aimed at ensuring a better future for the peoples of the world.

28. He also said that divisions and disputes among developing countries weakened their autonomy and only served the interests of the superpowers. As an example, he cited the continuation of the conflict between Iraq and Iran despite the efforts and initiatives made by Iraq and other countries and regional and international organizations to end that conflict in an equitable manner that would safeguard the rights of both parties and he said that the conflict had clearly affected the course of development in the developing countries as a

whole. It had adversely affected the extent of financial aid provided by Iraq and the Gulf States and had drained enormous resources that could have been utilized for world development and progress. Despite the exigencies of the war, Iraq had continued the implementation of investment programmes prepared in accordance with its five-year national development plans.

29. He also spoke of the material and moral support that the Government of Iraq had extended to ECWA. The Government had constructed the temporary headquarters which cost over \$US 5 million and in the mean time it had built the permanent headquarters according to the specifications stipulated by the United Nations, which cost more than \$US 40 million. He added that the Government of Iraq had provided suitable accommodations for ECWA staff and had built an International School for their children, with a view to facilitating the work of the Commission in implementing its ambitious programmes. He urged the Commission to utilize its annual budget rationally and to aspire towards the establishment of new programmes and goals compatible with the socio-economic development of member States.

30. Mr. Thamer Razouqi, Minister of Finance of the Republic of Iraq and Chairman of the ninth session, then addressed the session. He welcomed the participants and said that the tenth session differed from the previous ones in that it marked the completion by the Economic Commission for Western Asia of a decade of fruitful endeavours. He said that the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq had been imposed on Iraq, which had frequently declared that it sought only peace and compliance with international conventions concerning non-interference in the affairs of other States. He congratulated ECWA on moving from its temporary location to its permanent headquarters and he wished ECWA, its Executive Secretary and its staff success in discharging the tasks assigned to them. He also expressed confidence that the support which ECWA was receiving from member States would be an incentive for even greater achievements.

31. The message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the tenth session was read out. It conveyed his greetings to the participants and his deep regret that, owing to official commitments, he was unable to address them personally on that very special occasion. He referred to the circumstances that ECWA had experienced until it was finally settled at its new headquarters and could devote all its time and energy to the implementation of its programme of work and hence to the service of its member States. He drew attention to the current time of testing for the world economy, the slower economic growth, the stagnation of world trade and the declining income of the developing countries and especially of the poorest amongst them. He called for concerted action for global economic recovery and the reversal of those trends. He also appealed to UNCTAD to utilize its forthcoming session to examine the problems involved and to agree on concrete measures for their solution. In his message he also requested the Commission to pay particular attention to two important issues, namely economic and technical co-operation among developing countries and active participation in international forums in which the developing countries could express their opinions and concerns. He stressed the importance of the role played by the Commission in the development of the region, through the promotion, formulation and implementation of projects in the various fields in which it operated. He added that it also constituted

a forum for the discussion and negotiation of regional and international economic and social issues and was providing advisory services for member States and disseminating information needed in the development process. In conclusion, the Secretary-General of the United Nations commended the accomplishments of the Commission in the past year, despite the difficulties it had encountered, and called upon its member States to support the Commission so that it would serve them effectively.

32. The Executive Secretary of the Commission made a statement in which he welcomed Mr. Taha Yassine Ramadan, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, and thanked him for his valuable address which reflected Iraq's desire to promote the objectives of the Commission which were aimed at furthering the course of development in the region. He thanked the President, Government and people of Iraq for all the facilities that they had provided for the ECWA secretariat, including the Commission's temporary and permanent headquarters. He said that the commendable generosity of the Government of Iraq had set a living example of what could be achieved by way of regional co-operation in that part of the world.

33. The Executive Secretary emphasized that the principal role of the Commission consisted in its endeavours to promote greater co-ordination and co-operation among its member countries in the field of developmental integration and that there was a pressing need for a careful definition of the modalities of that co-operation, particularly in view of the economic recession, the consequent decrease in public spending and the rationalization of energy consumption which had led to reduced demand for petroleum, the most important source of energy. The world economic recession had affected the developing countries and increased their acute balance of payments deficit, lowered their growth rates and widened the gap between them and the developed industrial countries. The situation had been aggravated by a reduction in the level of agricultural and food production and consequently most imports to the Third World Consisted of food products. As regards world industrial production, the Third World was still making only a minor contribution which would amount to no more than 13 per cent by the end of the century if the current levels continued. Consequently, there had been a call by the international community for a restructuring of the world economy through the establishment of a New International Economic Order although the dialogue aimed at the establishment of that new order was still being impeded by complex problems.

34. The Executive Secretary referred to five significant events which had occurred in the region of Western Asia during 1982-1983 and which had adversely affected development issues and international co-operation in the region:

- (a) The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the sufferings of the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples, and the consequent devastation of the Lebanese economy, the disruption of its agricultural production, the threat to its water resources and the hindrance of its development and reconstruction endeavours;
- (b) Israel's persistent annexation and occupation of Arab territories and its practices and

measures designed to alter the legal status and the geographic, demographic and cultural features of those territories. He pointed out that, in the resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the question of Palestine was designated as the heart and core of the Middle Eastern problem. He emphasized that the Palestinian people, under the leadership of their legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, should be enabled to determine their own destiny and recover their legitimate and inalienable rights; (c) The continued armed conflict between Iran and Iraq, which was threatening peace and security and impeding their development endeavours, and the failure of all peace mediation efforts in spite of Iraq's ready response to such initiatives; (d) The reduction in oil prices, which might have adverse repercussions on development plans and projects not only in the oil-producing States but also in other countries of the region and many countries of the Third World; (e) The tragic earthquakes that had struck Yemen in the latter part of 1982, affecting many villages in which thousands of people were killed. That event had been particularly catastrophic since it came in the wake of the flood disaster in Democratic Yemen in the summer of 1982.

35. He said that those principal events that had affected the region constituted obstacles to development endeavours at the national level and imposed constraints on regional co-operation. The region had witnessed a decline in growth rates in recent years since average GDP growth rates had decreased from 10.2 per cent in 1979 to about 6 per cent in 1981 and that rate was likely to decline even further unless effective measures were taken to overcome international and regional constraints.

36. The Executive Secretary pointed out that those events constituted challenges which would require substantial efforts to be made to face them, and said that those challenges could be met only by regional development endeavours based on the principle of collective self-reliance through forms of co-operation between countries of the region and also with other countries of the Third World and with the international community as a whole in order to avoid the dangers of economic dependence. He referred to the Charter of National Economic Action which was endorsed by the Arab Summit Conference held at Amman in 1980 in which emphasis was placed on the importance of the principles of national economic integration, collective self-reliance, the promotion of indigenous Arab capabilities and avoidance of the dangers of economic dependence.

37. The Executive Secretary briefly reviewed some of the main aspects of the secretariat's activity such as its contribution to the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Conferences on the Question of Palestine which was held at Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates from 25 to 29 April 1983, to the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Asian Group of the Group of 77 which was held at Baghdad from 7 to 14 February 1983, to the joint mission to programme the reconstruction of the province of Dhamar in Yemen following the earthquake; the provision of technical advice for the Government of Lebanon and the formulation of a plan covering certain aspects of the reconstruction of Lebanon

and, finally, the studies, advisory services and workshops organized by the Commission in various fields falling within its terms of reference. In that connection, the Executive Secretary commended the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development for its effective contribution to the holding of the workshop held by ECWA in Amman and the subsequent symposium. He also thanked the Government of Jordan for hosting both the workshop and the symposium and expressed gratitude to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities for its continued support of the ECWA programme in that field.

38. The Executive Secretary drew attention to the regional preparatory meeting for International Youth Year (1985) and the regional meeting on agricultural development due to be held in Baghdad at the headquarters of the secretariat in October 1983.

39. He referred to the development of co-operation and co-ordination with regional Arab organizations, particularly the League of Arab States and the Follow-up Bureau of the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Gulf States.

40. In conclusion, the Executive Secretary expressed the confidence felt by the Commission as a result of the experience that it had accumulated with the backing and support of ECWA member States.

41. Statements were made by the representatives of the following organizations; Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development; Arab Labour Organisation; Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization; Arab Organization for Administrative Sciences; Arab Organization for Industrial Development, FAO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF. They all expressed their thanks to the Commission for their invitation to the meeting and further expressed the preparedness of their organizations to co-operate with the Commission even within its terms of reference. Also the representatives of Algeria, France, Germany (Federal Republic of) Netherlands, Turkey, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics made statements.

1. Retrospect and perspective of the Commission's work (agenda item 6)

42. That item was considered in a closed meeting held by the Commission on 9 May 1983 in which the secretariat submitted document E/ECWA/161.

43. Following discussion of that item the Commission considered draft resolutions E/ECWA/X/L.1, L.2, and L.7. (For action by the Commission see resolutions 116(X), 119(X), and 122(X) in chapter IV of this report.

2. Report on the activities of the Commission (agenda item 7)

(a) Progress made in the implementation of the work programme

44. In introducing that item of the agenda, the Executive Secretary drew attention to documents E/ECWA/162, and Add.1 and Add.2. He explained that the activities undertaken by the ECWA secretariat fell into two categories:

substantive activities planned in the programme of work and priorities under the regular budget, and operational activities within the framework of the Commission's technical co-operation programme. He then briefly presented the documents relating to that item and pointed out that during the year the secretariat had encountered considerable difficulties; its activities had been impeded by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and it had had to move twice. Nevertheless, the secretariat had been able to achieve steady progress in the implementation of the activities scheduled under its 14 work programmes. It had completed several operational activities in its technical co-operation programme. Those activities included regional advisory services provided at the request of member States and a number of projects undertaken by ECWA in the capacity of executing agency.

45. One representative spoke of the positive activity undertaken by the Commission in the field of food and agriculture and requested the Commission to develop its activity in that field. He referred to the Commission's study on rural poverty alleviation in Egypt and said that it had a social character and he would have preferred that the Commission had undertaken an integrated study on the inadequacy of resources for agricultural production in Egypt, particularly food production. He went on to say that the Commission had not sufficiently covered the problem of desertification despite the fact that a large number of member States were concerned with that problem. The representative also requested that priority should be accorded to oil-refining and that efforts should be intensified in the field of petrochemicals and reliance should not be placed exclusively on the sale of oil as a raw material, the marketing of which was subject to fluctuations that affected the revenues of the oil-exporting countries. He also drew attention to the need to increase efforts to produce energy from alternative sources and in particular from solar energy, which was abundant in the ECWA region and a non-depletable source of energy.

46. Another representative said that the States of the region were highly optimistic that they would receive from ECWA various forms of technical assistance and consequently they were hopeful that ECWA could make an effective contribution to eliminating negative aspects that had been, and were still, associated with the technical aid provided by the United Nations and other organizations to member States. He said that ECWA should promote efficient co-ordination among the beneficiary States and those organizations in order to enable the States to obtain maximum benefit from that aid and to avoid increased costs and lost time. He then spoke about the circumstances that had impeded the full achievement of the Commission's goals. He expressed confidence that the Commission, now settled in its permanent headquarters, would make every endeavour to achieve the objectives assigned to it in order to ensure the desired benefit for the peoples of the member States. The representative also spoke about the fields that ECWA had not been able to cover and the programmes that had not been implemented and requested that special attention should be given to agro-industries and food security. He referred to the endeavours of Arab organizations and to the studies that they were

conducting, particularly in connection with food security, and requested the Commission to co-ordinate its activities with those organizations to reach the desired objectives. He also requested that special attention should be paid to new and renewable sources of energy as one of the most recent and important subjects and one that was directly related to the conservation and better use of oil resources. The representative also referred to the chemical fertilizer industry and to the need to open the region's markets to its own products instead of turning towards the world markets. He also spoke about the need to develop that industry in order to meet the needs of the Arab markets.

47. One representative made some observations on the priorities in the Commission's programmes and asked whether the failure to begin implementation of some projects was due to financial reasons or whether priority had been assigned to other projects. He strongly emphasized the need for the Commission to consider the importance of the forthcoming UNCTAD Conference. He also wondered about the present situation in regard to the establishment of the Arab Institute for Banking and Financial Studies to which reference had frequently been made although there had been no significant progress.

48. Another representative asked whether ECWA could study ways to eliminate the phenomenon of maritime piracy to which traders from the region were exposed. He also asked about the extent to which the Commission had succeeded in collecting data on existing joint ventures between the States of the region and further inquired about the possibility of helping to provide those States with commercial data on import-export trade with developing countries.

49. One representative referred to two programme elements that had not yet been initiated. The first element related to human settlements namely, "The evaluation and improvement of the building materials industry." He referred to the importance of that subject and to its impact on improving development, building and construction and that it was also related to the reduction of dependency on imports and the better use of available local materials. The second element related to science and technology, namely, "the relationship between imported technology and the development of technological capabilities." He requested that considerable attention should be paid to those two elements in the 1983 programme.

50. One representative commended the efforts of the Executive Secretary and the staff of ECWA with regard to the implementation of the programmes that had proved to be successful in the past few years and he hoped that in the current year, the Commission would be able to implement those programmes it had not been able to implement in the past. He said that co-operation with international and regional organizations and government bodies in member States would help to implement those programmes. He requested the establishment of an integrated plan to deal with any question within the priorities endorsed by the countries of the region. The plan would clearly define the objectives

and would determine the requirements for their achievement through projects and other specific works that might lead to those objectives. The plan would also determine the responsibility of each department with regard to the implementation of its assigned share thereof. In that way, the issue at hand would be dealt with in a manner more in keep with the results and goals at which the countries of the region were aiming in the established plans.

51. One representative said that his country saw an important role for Commission at the current time, and that the Commission's fulfilment of its responsibilities towards member States was essential for the utilization of its technical staff in the study, preparation, follow-up and evaluation of regional projects and co-ordinating the mutual exchange of information in all the economic and social fields. He expressed hope that the meeting of the Commission would produce the results to which everyone aspired. In regard to agriculture and food security the representative said he wished that the Commission had reviewed the studies and the projects which had been implemented in the countries of the region or those which were in the process of implementation. He also requested that the same system be applied to all sectors.

52. He referred to the Commission's handling of the problem of desertification saying that it was not sufficient and that the Commission should contact the United Nations Environment Programme and the Arab countries concerned with that problem to familiarize itself with the efforts that they had made and the accomplishments that they had achieved in that area.

53. The secretariat then responded to the questions and observations of representatives of member States. The secretariat explained that in the field of agriculture emphasis should be focused on the following points: (a) The Commission's Agriculture Division was a joint ECWA/FAO Division and its activities were fully co-ordinated with FAO; (b) The issue of food security constituted the principal concern of many federations and organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the World Food Council, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Council of Arab Economic Unity and the Arab Federation for Food Industries; (c) In order to avoid duplication of work between the Commission and the above-mentioned organizations, the Commission had confined its activity in that field to conducting studies in some countries of the region to illustrate current food production, future potential, and actual consumption and to emphasize the importance of co-operation between countries of the region for the purpose of reducing the impact of hazards when they occurred. The secretariat expressed its concern for the establishment of an integrated approach for food security at the Arab regional level which would determine the contribution and assistance of each organization in its implementation. The secretariat noted that the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development

undertaken the task of establishing that integrated plan but the problem remained primarily in the provision of sufficient financing. The Commission reiterated its preparedness to co-ordinate with all the organizations working on food security. The current year had been characterized by several joint activities with the Council of Arab Economic Unity in the field of food security for the purpose of reaching an agreement concerning the strategic Arab reserve, and with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development for carrying out a study on food security in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Commission had also held discussions with officials of Egypt on undertaking specific activities in the field of food security.

54. The secretariat noted that the problem of desertification was basically a responsibility of the United Nations Environment Programme and other specialized agencies such as FAO and UNESCO. The role of the Economic Commission for Western Asia in that field was only pivotal. The Commission had held an expert meeting on the management, conservation and development of agricultural resources in Damascus in March 1981, in co-operation with FAO and the Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands. The meeting led to a number of important practical recommendations. The Commission succeeded in formulating seven project proposals to combat desertification but those were never implemented owing to a lack of resources. The Federal Republic of Germany had expressed its desire to finance that proposal relating to the study of strategies for range management in the region. The important recommendations submitted by the above-mentioned expert meeting included one to the effect that establishment of a regional centre for contact and support for the environment should be established. Co-ordination between the Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme and other United Nations agencies would be carried out through biannual meetings. At the national level, specialized missions to combat desertification would be sent by UNEP to the countries of the region, with three of those missions, in which ECWA would participate, being sent to Democratic Yemen and Yemen.

55. In response to the question concerning the paucity of studies on rural development, the secretariat said that the Commission had participated with FAO in the implementation of a number of studies, including the study on alleviation of poverty and agricultural development in Egypt and a similar study concerning Democratic Yemen. Other studies on rural development were being prepared by the Commission, including a study on the evaluation of integrated rural development experiences in Egypt, especially with regard to management, organization, level of performance and extent of public participation. Those studies would be discussed at the expert meeting scheduled to take place at Baghdad in October 1983. A regional meeting on rural development would follow, attended by representatives of several member States of ECWA to monitor the planning and policy framework of the problem of rural poverty and also to determine the priorities for the necessary activities.

56. Regarding the science and technology programme and the programme element on "The relationship between processes of importing technology and the development of technological capabilities", the secretariat stated that work had already begun on that element and a report would be issued on that subject towards the end of 1983. On the co-ordination of science and technology activities, the secretariat mentioned that it was essential to have a co-ordinating body to avoid duplication of activities and to provide resources, particularly in connection with the activities of the centres for scientific research and development. The secretariat then explained that both the regional paper which reflected the Arab position on science and technology and which was submitted to the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, and the regional paper submitted by ECWA and adopted by the Regional Preparatory Meeting held at Amman in 1978 and later presented to the Vienna Conference had been taken into account during the formulation of the proposed programme of work for the biennium 1984-1985. The secretariat also explained that it had based its medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 in the field of science and technology on the Vienna Programme of Action which had been adopted by the General Assembly. The secretariat welcomed the revival of the idea of establishing a regional Arab centre for the transfer and development of technology. It had submitted a paper on that subject to a meeting of the Federation of Arab Councils on Scientific Research, regarding exchange of scientific information and horizontal transfer of technology, which was held at Baghdad in April 1982.

57. With regard to the human settlements programme, the secretariat remarked that since the beginning of the year it had been mainly concerned with two important elements: (a) analysing the human settlements situation, and (b) improving the building and construction materials industry. With regard to the first element, the Commission had endeavoured to provide the planners and decision-makers with a clear and reliable picture of the human settlements situation in order to deal with that problem. As regards the evaluation and improvement of the construction and building materials industry, the Commission would not confine itself to a study and analysis of issues relating to the consumption, production and importation of building materials for estimating the needs of those countries, but would concentrate on the requirements and capabilities of the construction materials industry and on research because the countries of the region were relying on imported materials and techniques instead of endeavouring, through research, to develop and discover techniques appropriate to their own requirements. Additionally, imported techniques were sometimes costly and unsuited to the climatic conditions and character of the region. Concern for low costs must be shown not only when purchasing materials or when building but also in operation and maintenance. Pre-fabricated buildings were considered an important area for research after the region had witnessed attempts to employ the methods used in the industrialized countries and which had met with varying degrees of success. The secretariat mentioned that that subject had been included

in the Commission's medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 and would constitute one of the important subjects to be dealt with in the Commission's forthcoming work programmes. In that respect, the Commission would co-ordinate with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements in Nairobi on the formulation of joint work programmes in which co-operation for their implementation was being carried out. The Commission would also utilize the studies undertaken by other regional organizations. The Commission would participate in meetings related to the same subject, including the symposium on the development of construction methods to be conducted by the Federation of Arab Councils on Scientific Research on Construction Methods, due to begin at Baghdad on 29 May 1983.

58. The secretariat explained that after the agreement had been finalized between ECWA and UNDP on the implementation of the preparatory project for the establishment of an Arab Institute for Banking and Financial Studies, a comprehensive survey was carried out in a number of member States, meetings were held with the authorities concerned and consultations took place at various levels. In the light of the information available, a draft document was prepared for the project to establish the proposed institute. The secretariat was currently discussing that document with the Arab Monetary Fund and other organizations and institutions for the purpose of endorsing it. That document would be presented in its final form to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and to the member States concerned for consideration and for the adoption of the necessary measures for its implementation.

59. With regard to the provision of advisory services for the least developed member States in the field of project evaluation, the secretariat explained that, owing to the paucity of expertise in that field, it had requested assistance from the World Bank and from the United Nations Personnel Department for the purpose of accelerating the process of providing the necessary expertise. With regard to the evaluation of joint venture operations in the region, the secretariat announced that all of the basic data concerning the major joint projects in the region had been collected. Currently, the secretariat was completing the requisite data and consulting with the regional organizations concerned in order to prepare that study.

60. In reference to the information provided by the secretariat with regard to trade among the countries of the region and between them and other countries, the secretariat explained that it reviewed and analysed periodically and in general terms, inter- and intra-regional trade. Furthermore, it occasionally undertook in-depth studies concerning inter-regional trade. With regard to the Commission's role at UNCTAD VI, the secretariat referred to ECWA's role at the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Asian Group of 77 which was held recently in Baghdad in preparation for UNCTAD VI and expressed its readiness to meet the demands of member States for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of their contribution to the Conference.

(b) Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission

61. The secretariat presented document E/ECWA/163 which included a summary of measures taken pursuant to the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its ninth session and at previous sessions and which were still under implementation and which did not fall under a particular agenda item. This included the following resolutions: 109(IX) The census of the Palestinian Arab people; 110(IX) Transfer of the offices of the Commission to Baghdad; 111(IX) World Assembly on Aging; 112(IX) Regional activities for International Youth Year; 113(IX) Regional food security; 114(IX) The ECWA medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989.

62. In the course of the discussion, one delegate requested an elucidation of the contents of paragraph 5 of document E/ECWA/163 concerning resolution 109(IX) pertaining to the census of the Palestinian Arab people, and stated that the United Nations Fund for Population Activities had been contacted unofficially to assist the Palestine National Fund in collecting data about the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian Arab people in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 33/147 of 20 December 1978 and that the Fund would initially appoint an expert consultant for undertaking a fact-finding mission for the purpose of determining the operational duties involved in rendering that type of assistance within the framework of the Fund's policies. The timetable and itinerary for that mission had not yet been set.

63. The secretariat replied that that issue had been discussed in detail during the ninth session and a decision was reached, in agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organization, that the census should take place within the framework of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and in accordance with the available information. That project had begun and was later postponed for financial reasons. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities had promised to send an expert consultant in that field. The issue should be pursued by the Palestine Liberation Organization in conjunction with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. The secretariat was ready to take part in pursuing that matter if so requested.

(c) Follow-up action on the implementation of resolution 107(IX) on international assistance to the flood-stricken areas of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

64. The secretariat submitted document E/ECWA/164 comprising a report on the activities undertaken after the issuance of the Commission's resolution 107(IX). The secretariat stated that the United Nations Economic and Social Council had issued, in accordance with the Commission's resolution in its proposed form, resolution 1982/59 which called for the urgent establishment

of a programme for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the flood-stricken areas of Democratic Yemen and which further called upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take the necessary measures to assist the Government of Democratic Yemen in the preparation of a comprehensive programme for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas. The United Nations General Assembly also issued in its thirty-seventh session resolution 37/150 which called for continuing the mobilization of the necessary resources for a comprehensive aid programme aimed at supporting the rehabilitation and reconstruction plans. The secretariat also referred to its efforts to provide the necessary technical support for the Government of Democratic Yemen. It mentioned that it had devised a framework for providing assistance reflected in a programme for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of affected areas and that it had also determined the principal elements of that programme and methods of implementation by the Commission. The secretariat mentioned the contributions given by Governments and international institutions and remarked that the level had been reasonable for relief operations. Unfortunately, in the stage of rehabilitation and reconstruction the level was not maintained and that had led, in particular, to a decrease in agricultural production which prompted the Government of Democratic Yemen to radically modify its development plan in the agricultural sector. The secretariat pointed out that Democratic Yemen was currently considering holding a meeting to review the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries with the participation of UNDP and the technical support of ECWA, during the latter part of the year.

65. The representative of Democratic Yemen thanked the sisterly Arab and other States for their support and necessary aid extended to alleviate the effects of the floods which had devastated the country the previous year. He also thanked the regional and international organizations for their prompt and valuable assistance in facing up to the burdens caused by the disaster and appealed to them to provide additional aid and to contribute to the reconstruction of the affected establishments. He mentioned the efforts of his Government in relief and reconstruction operations and requested the international community to increase its contribution to the rebuilding and reconstruction of the affected areas. The representative commended the proposals of the secretariat.

66. A number of delegates endorsed the proposals set forth in the document. They hoped that those proposals would be adequate for dealing with the situation resulting from the disaster which had befallen Democratic Yemen.

67. Another representative thanked the secretariat for its efforts. He endorsed the proposals and programmes drawn up by the Commission. He also requested the Commission to exert additional effort and to contact parties that were providing assistance, be it governmental, international or regional organizations, in order to urge them to render further assistance to Democratic Yemen. That proposal was approved by the delegates.

(d) Earthquake in Yemen

68. The secretariat introduced that item in document E/ECWA/165/covering the dreadful earthquake which had occurred in Yemen on 13 December 1982 and the enormous losses it caused in human life and property, crops and animal wealth, and public facilities and services.
69. The secretariat noted that in response to the appeal made by the Government of Yemen, the United Nations General Assembly had issued resolution 37/166 on assistance to Yemen in which it requested international organizations to offer the necessary aid. In response to the Government's request, the ECWA secretariat participated in a joint mission with Arab and international organizations to assess the damage which resulted from the earthquake. A practical programme of reconstruction was proposed and specific policies for its implementation were recommended. The report was submitted to the Government in its final form.
70. The secretariat affirmed its readiness to participate in the reconstruction efforts at the request of the Government of Yemen and within the limits of its available resources.
71. The Head of the delegation of Yemen mentioned that the earthquake had resulted in the death of 1600 citizens and the injury of about 1400 citizens; more than 42,000 houses were damaged, of which 15,000 were completely demolished, and the rest were partially demolished; in addition, mosques and public facilities such as schools, hospitals, and agricultural property were destroyed. The total losses were estimated at two billion US dollars. The Government of Yemen had mobilized efforts in an attempt to provide aid and relief. Many friendly and sister States and international organizations had provided assistance. The State had carried out a study and established a programme for reconstruction. It had also established the High Council for the Reconstruction of Affected Regions. The Head of the Yemen delegation thanked the Commission for the advisory services it had provided and for its preparation of the study on the impact of the earthquake on development in Yemen.
72. One representative commended the Commission for its efforts to assist in the assessment and repair of the damage which had affected the two Yemens as a result of the natural disasters. The representative referred to the mission which had been sent to Yemen and which had recommended the implementation of the programme for a phased reconstruction. He wondered about the plan that the secretariat intended to adopt to follow-up the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme as had happened in the case of Democratic Yemen. He requested ECWA to follow-up the resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Paris, 14 December 1981) since the two countries affected by those natural disasters fell into that category.
73. Another representative thanked the secretariat for its valuable efforts in providing a clear picture of the magnitude of the disaster caused by the earthquake which had occurred in Yemen. He also thanked the joint mission of international and Arab organizations for its efforts to report on the cost of the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme as well as on the recommendations for its implementation. He also commended the Arab States and the regional and international organizations which had offered generous assistance to alleviate the damage caused by the earthquake. He appealed to those countries and organizations to increase their aid for the second phase of rehabilitation and reconstruction pursuant to General Assembly resolution 37/166 of 17 December 1982.

74. Another representative said that the problem in Yemen had two parts: the first part was related to the reconstruction of a large number of houses, and the second part to the provision of assistance to the farmers. He requested the Commission when it attended the forthcoming UNCTAD Conference or any other international conference to concentrate on the items which dealt with assistance to the least developed countries.

75. The secretariat explained that it was following-up the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme in Yemen and that it had prepared in co-operation with other organizations a detailed report on agricultural assistance.

76. On the conclusion of the debate, draft resolution E/ECWA/XL.12 was submitted to the Commission which adopted it at its seventh meeting on 11 May 1983. For the procedure adopted by the Commission see resolution 117(X), chapter I of the present report.

(e) Follow-up action on the implementation of ECWA resolution 27(III)
on the general study of the economic and social situation and
potential of the Palestinian Arab people

77. The secretariat introduced document E/ECWA/166, which contained a summary of activities that it had undertaken in following-up that resolution. It noted that in accordance with resolution 27(III) and the relevant paragraphs of resolution 88(VIII), the Commission, in 1981, had concluded a contract with Team International for the completion of the project in 16 months, in the light of the objectives established in accordance with those two resolutions. The company undertook the task through a research team which had scientific expertise. The company encountered many challenges in data collection and in the development of the necessary research tools, but managed to complete the study in spite of the difficulties it had encountered owing to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Within the context of that item the secretariat presented document E/ECWA/166/Add.1 which represented the final report of the company. The secretariat noted that aside from the final report and its summary, there were 23 other documents which dealt with various social and economic aspects of the Palestinian people, both in the occupied territories and in the host Arab countries. Those documents also contained models of the research tools, the statistical data and a bibliography. The Executive Secretary reported that, owing to the circumstances that surrounded the company in Beirut, he had received the research document only about one month ago. Therefore the Economic Commission for Western Asia had to submit the report on the study without the other research annexed to it. The secretariat then thanked the PLO for its close co-operation during the stages of implementation of that project. The secretariat also thanked the Government of Qatar for its generous contribution in bearing the greater part of the costs of that study. The secretariat also thanked all members of the Commission for their support for the project during the past years.

78. One representative commended the efforts which had been made to carry out the study in an integrated and objective way. He proposed that member States study the summary report and prepare their observations and remarks on it for submission to the secretariat no later than next mid-June, in preparation for the convening of a Committee of member States established by that session to review the report in the light of those observations and to make amendments thereto so that it could be submitted to the International Conference on the

Question of Palestine due to be held in Paris in August of that year. He also proposed that the secretariat should distribute, in the near future, the complete study, consisting of more than ten volumes, to the member States and that it should be discussed during the eleventh session of the Commission in the coming year.

79. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization thanked the secretariat and the member States of ECWA for their efforts in pursuing and completing that study. He endorsed the two proposals submitted by the previous representative.

80. Another delegate then spoke in support of the proposals and called for the adoption of a two-part resolution concerning that issue, one part covering the detailed study to be sent to member States and another part concerning the brief report to be presented at the Paris Conference.

81. After consultations among the delegations of member States, draft resolution E/ECWA/X/L.9 was submitted to the Commission (see resolution 123(X), chapter IV for the procedure adopted by the Commission).

3. Programme of work and priorities for 1984-1985 and
report of the Standing Committee for the Programme
(Agenda item 8)

82. In its first session held at Baghdad from 7-10 May 1983, the Standing Committee for the Programme discussed the programme of work and priorities for the period 1984-1985 (E/ECWA/167) and submitted its report^{1/} to the tenth session of the Commission.

83. In its seventh meeting held on 11 May 1983 the Commission adopted draft resolution E/ECWA/X/L.6 (see chapter IV, for the text of resolution 115(X)).

4. Follow-up action at the regional level on the United
Nations world conferences and ECWA regional meetings
(Agenda item 9)

84. The secretariat explained that that was a standing item on the agenda for the meetings held by the Commission. It presented document E/ECWA/168/Add.1 which included follow-up action on the World Assembly on Aging. He noted that in accordance with paragraph 4 of the Commission's resolution 111(IX), ECWA had participated in the World Assembly on Aging which was held at Vienna in July-August 1982 and which endorsed the Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging. The Commission summarized the main elements of that plan and the other social recommendations and the modalities for their application at the national, regional and international levels.

85. One delegate expressed appreciation for the work of the secretariat in following-up of United Nations world conferences and regional meetings of the Commission. He also hoped that the secretariat would continue co-ordinating between member States in preparation for forthcoming international conferences.

^{1/} See the report of the Standing Committee for the Programme (7-10 May 1983) in document E/ECWA/167/Add.1/Rev.1 .

86. He added that, in the light of the declaration issued by the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries which was held in New Delhi in March 1983, concerning collective self-reliance in all economic, commercial, industrial and agricultural areas, all member States of the Commission must endeavour to implement that declaration in the interests of all countries in the region for the purpose of bolstering their negotiating position vis-a-vis developed countries. He referred to the Conference of the Developing Countries Members of the Group of 77 in Buenos Aires and the initiatives of the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries. He hoped that all developed countries would respond to the position adopted by the developing countries for the purpose of accelerating the initiation of comprehensive negotiations so as to establish a New International Economic Order. He further hoped that the holding of UNCTAD VI in Belgrade in June 1983 would present an opportunity for all developed countries to announce their positive response to the initiatives of the non-aligned countries with regard to comprehensive negotiations concerning the immediate needs of the developing countries for governmental development aid, the alleviation of their debt-burden, as well as the assistance of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the International Development Association in the fields of basic commodities, international trade, food and energy.

87. Another delegate pointed out that ECWA had followed-up only one conference, the World Assembly on Aging, the subject of which did not pose a basic problem within the region whose member States showed particular concern for the elderly. That, however, should not reduce the need for forward planning for elderly persons from a social and humanitarian point of view. He said that no mention had been made of other important conferences in the region despite the fact that they had been covered by ECWA.

88. One delegate said that the Arab countries were rendering a great number of services to the elderly in keeping with their religious values and Arab traditions. Hence, that positive aspect should be highlighted in an objective manner.

89. The secretariat explained that despite the need to take into consideration regional priorities in following-up world conferences, it would remain committed to following-up conferences mentioned in the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. It also said that the plan of action submitted by ECWA had stressed the distinct characteristics and traditions of that region and had also emphasized that the family was a secure home and a safe refuge. The secretariat also commented on the subregional seminar organized by the Follow-up Bureau of the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Arabian Gulf States that had met in Bahrain in November 1982 and had affirmed those characteristics and traditions.

5. The financial status of the Commission's programmes
(Agenda item 10)

90. The secretariat introduced document E/ECWA/169 containing a detailed report on the financial status of the Commission's programmes including available resources from the regular budget of the United Nations and its extrabudgetary and other resources available to the Commission during 1982. It also introduced document E/ECWA/169/Add.1 which contained the report of the secretariat on the status of the Financial Contributions Account relating to regional activities undertaken by the Commission and document E/ECWA/169/Add.2 which contained details of extrabudgetary resources which were available to the Commission during 1982. The secretariat explained that as far as the coming biennium 1984-1985 was concerned, the addition of new resources for substantive programmes was not expected, except for one substantive post for industrial development in addition to the reclassification of the post of a chief of a substantive division. Owing to those circumstances, the secretariat sought the re-allocation of some of the resources and had requested additional resources from the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly in order to facilitate the operation and maintenance of its new permanent headquarters. The requirements for operating the new permanent headquarters were made available from the resources which were provided by the General Assembly and from the generous contribution provided by the Government of Iraq which amounted to two million and seven hundred thousand U.S. dollars. The secretariat thanked member and non-member States and the organizations which had provided support during the present biennium for the Commission. The Commission especially thanked the Government of Qatar for its contribution during last year's session and the Government of Lebanon for its support for the Commission during 1982 when the Commission was located in Lebanon. The Secretariat declared that it was about to complete its negotiations with, France, Germany (Federal Republic of) and the Netherlands on the co-operation for the implementation of some elements of the work programme for the biennium 1983-1984. It also thanked the Commission of the European Communities for its assistance to the energy programme currently being undertaken by the Commission.

91. One representative wondered about the lack of reference, during the consideration of the budget, to a reserve fund that would enable it to deal with contingencies such as natural disasters, i.e. earthquakes, floods like those that had affected Yemen and Democratic Yemen and such as the loss in human life and the damage in property that were inflicted upon both the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples as a result of Israeli invasion of Lebanon; and another example of such contingencies was the oil slick in the Gulf. Thus, the availability of the reserve fund would enable the secretariat to provide advisory services to member States upon their request in such cases.

92. Another representative made an observation regarding the continued spending on projects that had been completed, such as the project of the Arab Centre for the Transfer of Technology and wondered whether the Commission was still spending on projects that had already been completed.

93. The Commission answered those observations by saying that it wished that a financial reserve fund would have been available, but the Commission's budget was approved by the United Nations and that the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly was the Committee concerned with the review of the budget and whatever was applicable to ECWA was also applicable to all other Economic Commissions. The secretariat also explained that the projects that were referred to were actually being completed, but there were still some financial obligations in connection with those projects.

6. Co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations
(Agenda item 11)

94. The secretariat submitted document E/ECWA/170 containing a report on the Commission's activities undertaken in support of economic and technical co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations. The secretariat emphasized that economic and technical co-operation among developing countries was assuming increased importance as a means for the achievement of collective self-reliance. The secretariat realized the importance of the role played by economic and technical co-operation activities among the developing countries in the achievement of economic integration in the ECWA region and had taken significant measures to promote the co-ordination of its internal programmes within the framework of technical co-operation among developing countries both inside and outside the region.

95. One representative expressed appreciation for all the contributions that ECWA had made in the preparation of research studies, the provision of advisory services, the organization of workshops and seminars and the support given to the establishment of training institutions and regional centres. He indicated that the critical economic circumstances throughout the world were giving special significance and a new dimension to economic co-operation among developing countries which made it necessary for ECWA to increase its activities not only in the implementation of forms of co-operation in the sphere of economic co-operation among developing countries within the framework of the ECWA countries but also within the framework of the developing countries in general.

96. One representative referred to the importance of that matter and said that UNCTAD was according to it particular attention. He indicated the need to concentrate on co-operation among developing countries not as an alternative to co-operation with developed countries but in parallel to such co-operation

so that co-operation among developing countries would complement co-operation with developed countries and strengthen the negotiating position of the developing countries in their dialogue and negotiations with the developed countries. He referred to the declaration promulgated by the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non aligned countries at New Delhi (March 1983) entitled "Collective self-reliance" and which included beneficial elements that could be used as guide-lines for the promotion of co-operation among member States of ECWA, all of which were members of the Non-aligned Movement. He requested that that declaration should be incorporated in the report on the tenth session so that the secretariat could use it as a guide-line in its future activities in favour of the member States of ECWA.

7. Other business (Agenda item 12)

97. Within the framework of that item, the subject of the work programme in favour of the least developed countries of the region and the efforts exerted by the Commission in order to implement the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries were discussed and draft resolution E/ECWA/X/L.8 was proposed.

98. At the seventh meeting, held on 11 May 1983, the Commission adopted the draft resolution (For the procedure adopted by the Commission see resolution 118(X), chapter I of the present report).

8. Adoption of the Commission's report on the tenth session (agenda item 13)

99. At the seventh meeting, held on 11 May 1983, the Commission adopted its draft report to the Economic and Social Council and authorized the Rapporteur to introduce any necessary editorial changes.

D. Programme of work and priorities

100. The Commission adopted the report of the Standing Committee for the Programme on the programme of work and priorities for the period 1984-1985 (E/ECWA/167/Add.1/Rev.1).

IV. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION
AT ITS TENTH SESSION

- 115(X) Programme of work and priorities for the period 1984-1985
(This resolution appears in chapter I of this report.)
- 116(X) Staff and administration questions
(This resolution appears in chapter I.)
- 117(X) International assistance to the earthquake-stricken areas of Yemen
(This resolution appears in chapter I.)
- 118(X) Programme of action in favour of the least developed countries
(This resolution appears in chapter I.)

119(X) The policy-making structure of the Commission^{1/}

The Economic Commission for Western Asia

Recalling its resolution 114(IX) establishing the Standing Committee for the Programme, and Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/64 adopting that resolution,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Secretary (E/ECWA/161) particularly paragraphs 13-16,

1. Calls upon member States to be represented at the annual sessions at the ministerial level;
2. Decides that, immediately prior to the Ministerial Meeting, a meeting of experts should be held to discuss all agenda items and report its recommendations to the ministerial meeting for their adoption in final form;
3. Decides further that, for the purpose of rationalizing the work of the Commission, the Standing Committee for the Programme meets prior to the annual sessions and reports as appropriate to the Ministerial Meeting held thereafter on all programme matters falling within its terms of reference;
4. Requests the Executive Secretary to include in the provisional agenda of future sessions a special item for discussion related to a priority theme, issue or problem facing the countries of the region.

7th meeting
11 May 1983

^{1/} This resolution was adopted following discussions of agenda item 6. See paras. 42-43 of this report.

120(X) The role of the Commission in United Nations world conferences, meetings and negotiations 1/

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system and paragraph 21, section IV of the Annex attached thereto,

Taking cognizance of the report of the Executive Secretary (E/ECWA/161) particularly paragraph 15,

Convinced of the need to increase the Commission's contributions into policy-making processes of international organizations and meetings,

1. Requests the Executive Secretary to submit to its eleventh session, through the Standing Committee for the Programme, a report identifying forthcoming United Nations world conferences, meetings and negotiations; and the envisaged contributions of ECWA in this field, in the form of preparatory regional meetings to be held at the expert and inter-governmental levels;

2. Requests further the Executive Secretary to make the necessary arrangements for the secretariat's active participation in UNCTAD(VI) to be held in Belgrade in June 1983 and report to its eleventh session through the Standing Committee for the Programme on the results of the Conference and the proposals of the secretariat for the follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference;

3. Requests also the Executive Secretary to include a special item in the agenda of the eleventh session on the Commission's preparations for UNIDO(IV) to be held in Nairobi, Kenya during 1984.

7th meeting
11 May 1983

1/ See paras. 84-90 above for the discussion leading to the adoption of this resolution and see paras. 42-43 of this report.

121(X) Note of thanks to the Government and the people
of Iraq

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Grateful to the Government of Iraq for its most generous hospitality in providing the Commission with the premises for its permanent headquarters despite present circumstances,

Conscious that the facilities offered by the Government of Iraq will provide an unparalleled opportunity for the legislative and executive organs of the Commission to fulfil the objectives of the Commission in the interests of regional co-operation and integration,

Noting with appreciation the inspiring address of His Excellency Mr. Taha Yassine Ramadan, First Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, on the occasion of the opening of the tenth session of the Commission;

1. Expresses its deep gratitude to His Excellency, Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq, as well as to the Government and people of Iraq, for their warm hospitality and for the permanent facilities provided to the Commission and its secretariat;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary to transmit this resolution to the Government of Iraq.

7th meeting
11 May 1983

122(X) Preparations for the meetings held under
the auspices of the Commission 1/

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Recognizing the need for intensified co-operation between the member States of the Commission and the secretariat for the preparation of meetings held under the auspices of the Commission,

Recalling its resolution 114(IX) establishing the Standing Committee for the Programme, and particularly paragraph 5 pertaining to the organization of meetings;

1. Urges ECWA members to designate focal points responsible for facilitating the work of the Standing Committee for the Programme in the period of time between its sessions.

7th meeting
11 May 1983

1/ This resolution was adopted following discussions of agenda item 6. See paras. 42-43 in chapter III of this report.

123(X) On the study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people 1/

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling its resolution 27(III) of 1976 which provided for the preparation of a study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people,

Also recalling General Assembly resolution 36/120C of 10 December 1981 on convening an International Conference on the Question of Palestine which will be held at Paris from 16 to 27 August 1983,

Noting the submission by the Executive Secretary concerning the study under consideration,

1. Decides:

(a) To refer the report contained in document E/ECWA/166/Add.1 of 5 May 1983 entitled "Final report on the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people in the region of Western Asia" to member States for study with a view to the submission of their observations or amendments to the ECWA secretariat not later than 15 June 1983;

(b) To establish, in accordance with the desire of member States for the submission of adequate information on the situation of the Palestinian people to the International Conference due to be held at Paris from 16 to 27 August 1983 at UNESCO headquarters, a sub-committee composed of the following members; Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine Liberation Organization, Saudi Arabia and any other member States wishing to participate therein, which will meet from 28 June to 1 July 1983 at the headquarters of the ECWA secretariat at Baghdad in order to redraft the report mentioned in document E/ECWA/166/Add.1, in the light of the observations received from member States and the deliberations of the sub-committee and with the omission of the list of documents contained on pages 131 and 132 of the said document, and to put the report into final form as a document issued by the Economic Commission for Western Asia for submission to the above-mentioned International Conference on the Question of Palestine;

(c) To request the Executive Secretary to send the study prepared by TEAM, the Arab engineering and management consultancy firm, on "The economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people in the region of Western Asia," together with the documents annexed thereto, to the member States for study prior to its discussion at the eleventh session of the Economic Commission for Western Asia;

(d) To request the Executive Secretary to follow-up the implementation of this resolution.

7th meeting
11 May 1983

1/ See paras. 77-81 above for the discussion leading to the adoption of this resolution.

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Annex I

LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION
AT ITS TENTH SESSION

<u>SYMBOL</u>	<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
E/ECWA/158/Rev.1	-	Agenda
E/ECWA/158/Add.1	-	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ECWA/159/Rev.2	4	Organization of work (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/160/Rev.1	5	Invitation of member States of the United Nations not members of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in the activities of the tenth session of the Commission. (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/161	6	Retrospect and perspective of the Commission's work
E/ECWA/162	7	Report on the activities of the Commission Progress made in the implementation of the work programme (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/162/Add.1	7(a)	Report on the activities of the Commission Progress made in the implementation of the work programme (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/162/Add.2	7(a)	Report on the activities of the Commission Progress made in the implementation of the work programme Technical co-operation activities (Report of the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/163	7(b)	Report on the activities of the Commission Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission (Note by the Executive Secretary)

<u>SYMBOL</u>	<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
E/ECWA/164 and Corr.1 (English only)	7(c)	Report on the activities of the Commission Follow-up action on the implementation of ECWA resolution 107(IX) on international assistance to the flood- stricken areas of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/165	7(d)	Earthquake in Yemen (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/166	7(e)	Report on the activities of the Commission Follow-up action on the implementation of ECWA resolution 27(III) on the general study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab People (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/166/Add.1	7(e)	Final report on the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people in the region of Western Asia
E/ECWA/167	8	Programme of work and priorities for 1984-1989
E/ECWA/167/Add.1/Rev.1 (Arabic only)	8	Report of the Standing Committee for the Programme (7-9 May 1983)
E/ECWA/168	9	Follow-up action at the regional level on the United Nations world conferences and ECWA regional meetings (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/168/Add.1	9	Follow-up action at the regional level on the United Nations world conferences and ECWA regional meetings Follow-up to the World Assembly on Aging, Vienna, 26 July-6 August 1982 (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/169 and Corr.1	10	The financial status of the Commission's programmes (Note by the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/169/Add.1 and Corr.1 and Corr.2 (in Arabic only)	10	The financial status of the Commission's programmes The strengthening of the Trust Fund for ECWA Regional Activities (Note by the Executive Secretary)

<u>SYMBOL</u>	<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
E/ECWA/169/Add.2/Rev.1	10	The financial status of the Commission's programmes Extrabudgetary resources supporting the Commission's programme
E/ECWA/170	11	Co-operation among developing countries (Report of the Executive Secretary)
E/ECWA/171		Draft report of the Commission on its tenth session
E/ECWA/X/L.1- 9		Draft resolutions
E/ECWA/INF.33		Provisional list of documents
E/ECWA/INF.34/Rev.3		List of participants

Annex II

PUBLICATIONS AND PRINCIPAL DOCUMENTS ISSUED SINCE THE NINTH SESSION

Symbol	Title
E/ECWA/NR/83/1	Regional Programme for New and Renewable Sources of Energy with Special Reference to Rural Applications
E/ECWA/NR/82/2	Energy Conservation in the ECWA Region: Prospects and possible lines of action
-	International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade: Activities in the ECWA region
E/ECWA/NR/11	Report on Improvement of National Mining Legislations: Assessment of the situation with regard to full sovereignty of member countries over their mineral resources
E/ECWA/NR/82/3	Role of Consulting and Engineering Design in the Development Process: A case study
-	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ECWA Region, 1982
-	Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ECWA Region, 1983
-	Trade and Economic Relations between the Countries of Western Asia and the Socialist Countries of Eastern Europe: Trends and prospects
	Statistical Appendix on Trade Flows between the Countries of Western Asia and the Socialist Countries of Eastern Europe
-	Technology and Management Dependence in the Oil Industry in the ECWA Region
	Operations of Transnational Corporations in Shipping with Special Reference to the ECWA Region
	Operations of Transnational Banks in Lebanon
	Agriculture and Development, Bulletin No. 5
E/ECWA/AGR/WG.13/3	Methods of Projecting Yield Prior to Harvesting: Early warning and food security
	Organization and Management of State Farming in Iraq

Symbol

Title

Review of Selected Rural Development Projects in the Republic of Iraq

Review of Selected Rural Development Projects in the Arab Republic of Egypt

Studies on Prices and Index Numbers in the ECWA region 1971-1981, fourth issue

Statistical Abstract of the Region of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, Fifth Issue, Baghdad 1982
Population Bulletin of ECWA, No 22

Population Bulletin of ECWA, No. 23

Population and Development in the Middle East

International Migration in the Arab World,
vol. I & II

Demographic and Related Socio-economic Data Sheets
for Countries of the Economic Commission for Western Asia

E/ECWA/ID/WG.7/1

Report on the Symposium on Plastic Technologies and Applications

Linear Programming Technique: its application to the problem of plant location and development

Report on the Workshop Technology and Process Design
Update: Petrochemicals, fertilizers and oil and gas processing

