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## ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST

REPORT ON CONSULTATIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF  
FAO REGARDING THE RESOLUTIONS TAKEN AT THE THIRD SESSION  
OF THE COMMISSION IN THE FIELD OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Note by the Executive Secretary

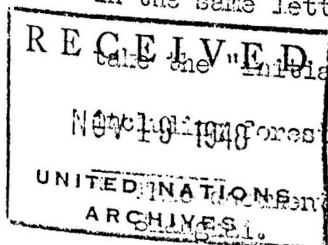
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As recommended by the Commission (Document E/CN.11/116), the Executive Secretary has consulted with the Director-General of the FAO regarding continued cooperation between FAO and the Commission. This note describes the outcome of these consultations and also the action taken on certain resolutions affecting FAO.

General Principles for Continued Cooperation with FAO

Both FAO and the Commission recognize that it is important to define clearly the respective responsibilities of the two organizations, and to coordinate their work in order to avoid overlapping of functions and duplication of effort. On 28 July 1948, the Executive Secretary addressed a memorandum to the Director-General of FAO as a basis for discussion of future working arrangements. The Director-General, in a letter of 10 August, was of the view that for the time being the two organizations should proceed under the overall agreement between the United Nations and FAO to consider specific activities of common concern to ESCAPE and FAC as they arise, rather than attempt to develop another detailed formal agreement. It was further suggested by FAO that at the present stage the two organizations should agree on certain broad principles and consider at a later date whether more detailed definition was desirable. To this the Executive Secretary agreed.

In the same letter, the Director-General of FAO suggested that FAO should take the "initiative" on all questions directly concerning food and agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and look to the Commission for leadership on all



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leadership on all non-agricultural matters. The Executive Secretary, while agreeing that the main responsibility for all questions concerning food and agriculture must necessarily be FAO's, questioned whether it was appropriate for initiative to rest solely with FAO. He pointed out that the Commission might desire to take up some questions concerning food and agriculture with the concurrence of FAO, or request FAO to consider more particularly some specific aspects of the problems, and therefore suggested that the words "primary responsibility" rather than "initiative" would be more appropriate. To this the FAO agreed.

#### Joint Working Arrangements

The first example of joint working arrangements between FAO and the Commission has been the Joint FAO/ECAFE Working Party on Agricultural Requisites which has been meeting in Shanghai (Document E/CN.11/117) and whose progress report is contained in Document E/CN.11/135. Similar joint working arrangements may be established when appropriate, due care being taken to avoid the difficulties encountered in this Working Party. It has also been agreed that, in any subsidiary bodies which may be established by FAO or the Commission in Asia and the Far East which are of direct or indirect interest to both organizations, an opportunity should be given to the other organization to be represented.

Attention is drawn to the suggestion contained in Document E/CN.11/138 on organizational structure, that it might prove desirable to follow the example of the FAO and the ECE by setting up a joint FAO-ECAFE ad hoc committee on agricultural matters of mutual interest to the two organizations. It may be noted by way of an alternative, however, that this FAO-ECE ad hoc committee has approved a proposal submitted jointly by the Director-General of FAO and the Executive Secretary of ECE to set up a "Committee on Agricultural Problems" within the framework of ECE, this committee to be serviced by the staffs of the two organizations in cooperation. This proposal awaits confirmation by ECE.

The FAO will shortly set up a Regional Office for Asia and the

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Far East which will greatly facilitate cooperation at the Secretariat level between FAO and the Commission.

Report by FAO on Food and Agricultural Conditions in ECAFE Region

The Commission, in its Resolution (E/CN.11/116) at the Third Session, also requested the FAO to present to the Commission at each session a detailed factual report on the food and agricultural conditions in the countries of the ECAFE region, describing in particular, with respect to each important food and agricultural commodity, the situation as it had developed since the preceding session and the measures taken, whether by member governments or by specialized agencies or other inter-governmental organizations. The FAO, in response to this request, has agreed to present a full report in the autumn of each year and briefer reports for other sessions of the Commission. The report for the Fourth Session will be circulated later.

Conference of Agricultural Officials

In the Resolution (E/CN.11/117) passed at its Third Session, the Commission recommended that a conference of officials engaged in the task of reconstruction in relation to food and agriculture in the ECAFE region might be called jointly by the FAO and the Commission as soon as the Joint Working Party had collected sufficient information on the possibilities of increased production through improved supplies of agricultural requisites, to consider, in consultation with the Working Party, the practical methods of implementing national food and agricultural plans. To this FAO agreed. The Executive Secretary originally suggested convening the conference early in October 1948, but in the light of the progress of the Working Party, both organizations have agreed that a later date would be more suitable. No definite date has yet been decided.

Technical Conference on Timber

In reply to the request made by the Commission (E/CN.11/119), the FAO stated that the subject of timber standardization would definitely be included in the agenda of the Far Eastern Forestry and Timber Conference

/to be convened

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to be convened by FAO early in 1949. The exact date and the place of the Timber Conference will be notified by FAO when decided.

In regard to the Commission's further request for FAO to call a prior meeting of experts, FAO suggested instead that a Working Party on Standardization should be established within the framework of the conference and instructed to report on its findings to the Conference.

Appeal for Bringing Down the Prices of Essential Commodities

In regard to the Resolution (E/CN.11/118) on the need to reduce the prices of essential commodities, the Executive Secretary, early in July, addressed letters to governments, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Interim-Coordinating Committee for International Commodity Arrangements, enquiring what measures had been, or might be, taken to meet this need. Replies were received from Hongkong, the Kingdom of Cambodia and Indo-China, and also from the FAO and the ICCICA. All stressed the complexity of the problem. In Indo-China a commission of study has been set up to examine measures for reducing the cost of living. The FAO referred to the proposed International Wheat Agreement, which unfortunately has not come into operation. The ICCICA made two suggestions: (1) that the subject matter of the resolution be brought up by government representatives at meetings of international commodity groups, and (2) that the Commission might consider the adoption of a resolution similar to one adopted at the First Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America, recommending governments to adopt the principles and practices set forth in Chapter VI of the Havana Charter in regard to the treatment of primary commodities; it is thought that such a resolution would facilitate steps towards wider participation in any commodity groups in which there is inadequate consumer participation and also towards adoption of the Havana Charter procedures where no group exists.

In view of the wide scope of the resolution, dealing as it does with the prices of all essential commodities and not merely of cereals or agricultural products, it is for the Commission to decide what further action is called for in the matter.