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EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION\*

Report of the United Nations Scientific Committee  
on the Effects of Atomic Radiation

1. The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation was established by resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955 at the tenth session of the General Assembly. It consists of the following members: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.
2. The Committee held its seventeenth session at the Geneva Office of the United Nations from 28 August to 6 September 1967. Dr. A.R. Gopal-Ayengar of India and Dr. Gordon C. Butler of Canada served as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively.
3. During that session the Committee discussed on the basis of reviews prepared in the Secretariat assumptions and parameters used in estimating dose commitments, recent information on radioactive contamination of the environment by nuclear tests, effects of ionizing radiation on the nervous system and the pathological significance of chromosome anomalies induced by radiation in somatic cells, as well as their possible use as indicators of exposure to radiation. The Committee expressed its intention of preparing for submission to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session a report dealing with such evaluations of risk as might result from its consideration of the aforementioned subjects.
4. During its seventeenth session, the Committee also began reviewing the information required to continue its assessment of world-wide levels of radiation from nuclear tests and observed that some of its earlier requests were now less

\* Item 36 of the provisional agenda.

than before to the problem of estimating risks to human populations. Increased knowledge of the current extent of environmental contamination, of the mechanisms of transfer of radioactivity to man through food chains and of biological effects might make it possible to modify those earlier requests. In particular, it might be possible to define more precisely the type, amount and location of measurements required on levels of radioactivity in the environment, foodstuffs and tissues of man.

5. The Committee proposed to complete the review of its requirements at its eighteenth session, and thereafter to make its conclusions known to States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

6. The assistance provided to the Committee by the Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Atomic Energy in Agriculture, which collected and assembled data on radioactive contamination of the human diet, was noted with appreciation.

7. Dr. Gordon C. Butler of Canada and Dr. Bo Lindell of Sweden were elected to serve as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, at the eighteenth and nineteenth sessions.

8. It was recognized that it would be necessary to hold one session in 1968 and requested that arrangements be made for the eighteenth session of the Committee to be held from 8 April to 19 April 1968 at Headquarters.

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