

305. In the process of the development of the Commission's work, the staff of the secretariat has naturally increased in numbers and widened its experience, but the work assigned to it by the Commission has increased in even greater measure; the Commission recognizes that this lack of balance should be corrected. In this connexion the Commission noted the proposals made by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly¹² and expressed the hope that it would be possible for the General Assembly at its next session to take appropriate action to strengthen the secretariat of the Commission.

306. The development of the Commission's activities has been facilitated by the enlargement of its membership and of its committee structure.

307. At its inception the Commission included the only four Asian countries which were Members of the United Nations, and the countries of the region found themselves in a minority in their own regional body. In 1951, under the "Lahore Agreement", countries from outside the region resolved to refrain from voting on Asian economic problems if their vote was likely to go contrary to the wishes of the majority of the Asian countries. The inclusion of a large number of formerly associate members as full members of the Commission, and the admission to the United Nations of many of these Asian countries, have changed the situation. Now, among twenty-four members and associate members, seventeen Asian countries have voting rights in the Commission and twelve are Members of the United Nations. This brings the United Nations closer to universality, and enhances the representative character of ECAFE.

308. During the same period, the Commission established a large number of subsidiary bodies: committees, sub-committees, working parties and *ad hoc* conferences. Thus, at its annual sessions, the Commission offers a forum for consideration of broad and important policy questions and provides a technical organization under

whose auspices meetings are periodically convened at which national experts from various countries pool their experience and make recommendations for the solution of problems faced by the countries.

309. The Commission's structure may now be considered as reasonably well established but the Commission will undoubtedly continue to make necessary adjustments in the light of changing circumstances as reflected in the annual work programme.

310. The development of the Commission's work related it of necessity to the work of the United Nations technical assistance programmes, both through direct help to TAA and through the secretariat advisory services to the Asian Governments, undertaken in accordance with the Commission's terms of reference as amended by the Council in 1951. The Secretary-General's proposals to the General Assembly¹³ take full account of this situation and emphasize the need for integrated United Nations action in the region. The Commission has come to occupy a special position in the region as an instrument of economic co-operation, within the framework of policies established by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

311. The Commission received with profound regret the announcement by Dr. Lokanathan, its Executive Secretary, of his forthcoming resignation. It was unanimous in expressing its deep appreciation to Dr. Lokanathan for the outstanding services he had rendered during the Commission's formative years. His leadership and untiring devotion had immeasurably helped in making ECAFE a major instrument for the economic development and the well-being of the people of the region. The Commission conveyed its warmest good wishes to Dr. Lokanathan on his retirement and expressed its earnest hope that during the years to come it would continue to benefit from his wise counsel and active co-operation.

¹² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 47, document A/3041.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

Part V

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS TWELFTH SESSION¹⁴

Resolution 15 (XII)

Exchange of experience and information on scientific and technical matters

The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East,

Having considered the document prepared by the Technical Assistance Board (ECAFE/INF/14),

1. *Records* its appreciation of the scientific and technical information and experience and training facilities provided to countries of the region by the United Nations and the specialized agencies participating in the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and by countries with special experience in particular fields;

2. *Believes* that exchange of scientific and technical

information and experience promotes economic development and strengthens economic co-operation;

3. *Recognizes* that all countries can make, each in its own way, useful contributions in this field, but that the under-developed countries are hampered in this respect by shortages of skilled personnel;

4. *Recommends* that economically advanced countries expand further, in the light of future needs and developments, their contributions in this regard for purposes of economic development and that the economically less advanced countries also make such contributions as may be practicable.

*161st meeting,
8 February 1956.*

¹⁴ Resolutions adopted by the Committee on Industry and Trade and endorsed by the Commission are included in part III, C, "Account of proceedings".