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**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA**

Technical Committee  
Fifth session  
31 March-2 April 1987  
Baghdad

**REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
ON THE WORK OF ITS FIFTH SESSION**

April 1987

**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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**PART I**



## INTRODUCTION

The fifth session of the Technical Committee was held from 31 March to 2 April 1987 at the Commission's headquarters in Baghdad. After the inaugural address by the Executive Secretary, the following officers were elected (see part II, chapter II of the report): the head of the delegation of Iraq, Chairman of the session; the head of the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic, Vice-Chairman; and the head of the delegation of Egypt, Rapporteur.

## I. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. The Committee considered the agenda before it in document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/1 and reached the following conclusions:

Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission:  
Progress made in the implementation of the work programme  
(Agenda item 6(a))

2. The Committee took note of the progress made in 1986 in the implementation of the work programme for the biennium 1986-1987 and expressed its satisfaction at the performance rate achieved despite the high vacancy rate. It approved the modifications to the work programme proposed by the Executive Secretary and expressed its appreciation for the efforts made by the secretariat in that regard. It recommended that there should be increased co-operation between the Commission and regional and subregional organizations with a view to avoiding duplication.

Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission:  
Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission  
(Agenda item 6(b))

3. The Committee took note of the follow-up action taken by the secretariat on the resolutions of the Commission and made the recommendations contained in paragraphs 4 to 7 below.

(iv) Commission resolution 144(XIII) on the filling of vacancies in the secretariat

4. The Committee gave renewed emphasis to Commission resolution 144(XIII), as endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1986/59, expressed its support for the measures taken by ESCWA with a view to filling vacancies, and continued to stress on the need to exempt ESCWA from the recruitment freeze, given that it cannot be accorded the same treatment as other United Nations offices and departments since it has yet to obtain the full staffing required if it is to implement its programmes effectively and make its impact felt on the development of the region.

(v) Commission resolution 145(XIII) on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian Arab people under occupation

5. The Committee recommended continued action in the spirit of this resolution, and provision to members and interested bodies of the studies and publications issued on the matter.

(vi) Commission resolution 146(XIII) on the general study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian people

6. The Committee endorsed the publication in 1987, in an economic series and a social series, of the individual parts of the study already approved.



(viii) Commission resolution 148(XIII) on the interregional consultation on developmental social welfare policies and programmes

7. The Committee approved the introduction to document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.8 setting out the general framework for developmental social welfare policies and programmes, and reconsideration of the full study and the summary thereof contained in the annex to that document and its revision by the secretariat after soliciting the views of member countries in order to take account of the interests of labour-receiving and labour-sending countries in an objective, scientific and balanced manner.

(xi) Commission resolution 152(XIII) on the request for the relocation of the Commission

8. The Committee took note of the ongoing negotiations between the secretariat and the Government of the host country and expressed the hope that they would facilitate the task of the relocation of the secretariat to other premises without incurring any cost to the United Nations as a result and without disrupting the work of the Commission. There will be consultation between the Government of the host country and the secretariat on the relocation of the Baghdad International School to a suitable new site. The Committee expressed its gratitude to the Iraqi Government for the facilities it continued to provide to the Commission.

(xii) Commission resolution 153(XIII) on the amendment of the provisional rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

9. Approval of the amendment of rule 1(a) of the Commission's rules of procedure so that the Commission would normally hold its session on a biennial basis, instead of every year, at a time to be determined by the members of the Commission.

Follow-up action at the regional level on United Nations world conferences and ESCWA regional meetings  
(Agenda item 7)

10. The Committee approved all of the recommendations made by the intergovernmental meetings organized by ESCWA at the regional level, namely:

(a) The Regional Intergovernmental Technical Meeting on New and Renewable Sources of Energy;

(b) The Second Meeting of Heads of Central Statistical Organizations in the ESCWA Region;

(c) The Intergovernmental Technical Meeting on Food Security.

It made the following recommendations:

(a) That an expert group meeting should be convened on an information network relating to new and renewable sources of energy, which the Government of Iraq was prepared to host;

(b) That the draft resolution introduced by the secretariat on the strengthening of national household survey capabilities should be approved;

(c) That ESCWA should endeavour to secure the necessary funding for the preparation of a methodological handbook on external migration statistics in the region;

(d) That there should be increased co-ordination with all international and inter-Arab organizations on the matter of radioactively or otherwise contaminated foodstuffs in order to prevent their delivery to consumers in the region.

Co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations  
(Agenda item 8)

11. The Committee took note of the endeavours and activities of the secretariat to promote co-operation among developing countries and international and regional organizations, expressed its great appreciation for the efforts made by ESCWA in that domain and recommended that co-operation with regional organizations should be reinforced and action taken to ensure its continuance.

Draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1988-1989  
(Agenda item 9)

12. The Committee discussed the document in question and a number of representatives made detailed observations and suggestions with regard to the items contained in the work programme. The Executive Secretary expressed his appreciation for their remarks and suggestions and stated that the secretariat would endeavour to give them practical application within the limits of the restrictions imposed upon it. The Committee commended the efforts made by the secretariat in the preparation of the draft programme of work and priorities and adopted it subject to the observations made by members.

13. The Committee noted with appreciation the institutional support provided in the past to the Commission's Environment programme by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and took note of the move on the part of UNEP to discontinue that support, which represented the total amount of the resources available to the Commission's Environmental Co-ordination Unit at a time when the United Nations was undergoing a financial crisis that would prevent it from providing such support in the immediate future. It recommended that the Executive Secretary should strive to ensure the continuation of the institutional support of UNEP to the Unit during the biennium 1988-1989.

Draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995  
(Agenda item 10)

14. The Committee considered the draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995: general framework and priorities, and representatives made preliminary observations thereon, as reflected in part II of the present report, commended the efforts made in its preparation and called for the plan to be brought into line with the economic situation of the region and its development potential. They made the following provisions:

(a) That the introduction should contain a brief analysis of the progress made and of the inherent potential and the efforts made by member countries to utilize it, while acknowledging that the present situation falls short of aspirations in that petroleum continues to play a fundamental role in the development process in most of the countries of the region;

(b) That it should take account of the need to embody a greater degree of complementarity with the plans of individual countries on the one hand and to be in harmony with the aspirations of the countries of the region for economic integration on the other;

(c) That it should stress the significance of the exceptional circumstances of the countries of the region and their impact on economic activity and development programmes, particularly those stemming from continuing Israeli aggression and Israeli occupation of Arab territory, the continuation of the war between Iran and Iraq and events in Lebanon.

15. The Committee approved the plan in principle and requested its submission to member countries so that they might, within two months, express their views thereon and on the manner in which it might complement the plans of individual countries.

16. The Committee adopted a draft resolution on the medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995 (see draft resolution 4 in chapter II below).

Discussion of the items on the provisional agenda of the  
ministerial meeting of the fourteenth session  
of the Commission  
(Agenda item 11)

17. The Committee approved the draft agenda contained in document E/ESCWA/14/L.1 as the provisional agenda for the ministerial meeting of the fourteenth session of the Commission.

Other matters  
(Agenda item 12)

(a) Quorum for the meetings of the Commission and  
its subsidiary bodies

18. The Committee approved the proposal of the secretariat contained in document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/10/Rev.1 that debate at intergovernmental meetings should be allowed to proceed when one third of the members were present but that the presence of a majority would be required for any decision to be taken.

(b) In-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure  
and functions in the economic and social sectors

19. The Committee took note of the contents of document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/11.

II. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS FIFTH SESSION  
FOR SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSION

Draft resolution 1

Progress made in the implementation of the work programme  
for the period 1986-1987

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Taking note of the modifications to the work programme for the period 1986-1987, as proposed in the report of the Executive Secretary<sup>1/</sup> pursuant to Commission resolution 142(XIII) of 24 April 1986,

Noting the financial crisis affecting the United Nations system and its impact on the Commission's programmes and on proper programme performance,

1. Notes with appreciation the progress made in the implementation of the work programme for the period 1986-1987;

2. Adopts the proposed modifications to the work programme for the period 1986-1987, as contained in the report of the Executive Secretary.<sup>1/</sup>

Draft resolution 2

Strengthening of national household survey capabilities<sup>2/</sup>

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Secretary on technical co-operation activities and technical assistance projects,<sup>3/</sup> particularly as it relates to the strengthening of national household survey capabilities,

Recalling that the National Household Survey Capability Programme was established to assist members of the Commission to obtain, by means of household surveys, the constant flow of statistical information necessary for the preparation and adoption of development plans and policies and to develop their national capabilities in the conduct of such surveys,

Recalling the reports of the Second Meeting of Heads of Central Statistical Organizations in the ESCWA Region and the Tripartite Review Meeting on regional household survey project RAB/80/009, as well as the recommendations made by them with regard to the importance of extending the project to the end of 1991,

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<sup>1/</sup> E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4(part I)/Rev.1/Add.1.

<sup>2/</sup> Adopted by the Technical Committee at its 3rd meeting, held on 1 April 1987.

<sup>3/</sup> E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4(part II)/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

Further recalling the contribution of the Commission to the inputs to the regional project and its future plans to increase its support to the project in the light of the budget proposed by the Tripartite Review Meeting held in March 1987,

Expressing its gratitude to the United Nations Development Programme for its interest in the National Household Survey Capability Programme and its contribution to the financing of the regional project,

Noting that a number of member countries which have prepared detailed household survey programmes have as yet been unable to achieve self-reliance owing to the lack of technical and financial resources and because of the obstacles indicated in the report of the Tripartite Review Meeting,<sup>4/</sup>

Further noting that the completion of household surveys within the framework of country programmes is largely dependent on the technical services provided by the regional project,

1. Stresses the importance of extending the project to the end of 1991, while calling upon the United Nations Development Programme to continue to contribute to the project and to provide funding at a level no lower than that of its present contribution and requesting the International Labour Organisation to appoint a regional adviser within the framework of the project,

2. Urges international organizations, the funding agencies and the Arab funds to provide financial and technical support to the members of the Commission in the implementation of their national household survey programmes.

### Draft resolution 3

#### Programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1988-1989

##### The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling its resolutions 114(IX) of 13 May 1982 and 125(XI) of 26 April 1984 establishing the terms of reference of the Technical Committee,

Noting with appreciation the draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1988-1989 proposed by the secretariat,<sup>5/</sup>

Taking account of the financial crisis of the United Nations and its impact on the programme,

1. Adopts, on the recommendation of its Technical Committee, the programme of work and priorities for the period 1988-1989, while taking into consideration the limited resources available and the United Nations programming regulations in effect;

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<sup>4/</sup> E/ESCWA/C.1/14/6/Add.1.

<sup>5/</sup> E/ESCWA/C.1/14/8 and Corr.1-2.

2. Requests the Executive Secretary to submit to the Technical Committee at its sixth session a report on any modifications that may be made to the work programme in the light of the observations made in the Technical Committee at its fifth session.

Draft resolution 4

Medium-term plan of the Economic and Social Commission  
for Western Asia for the period 1990-1995

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, and particularly those of its provisions that relate to the regional commissions in developing co-ordination at the regional level and to the functions and responsibilities of the commissions in the programme planning and review process,

Also recalling General Assembly resolution 36/228 of 18 December 1981 on programme planning, and part A of that resolution in particular,

Taking account of the final report<sup>6/</sup> of the Meeting of Eminent Persons on the Programme Priorities of the Medium-Term Plan for the Period 1990-1995, held at Amman on 29 and 30 January 1987,

1. Stresses the need to ensure that the plan fully and harmoniously reflects the development priorities and requirements of the States members of the Commission in the light of recent developments in the region and the world;

2. Approves, in that connection, the draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995: general framework and priorities<sup>7/</sup> in the light of the priorities set forth hereunder and subject to the detailed observations on the plan to be submitted by members within the next two months;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary:

(a) To ensure, in the formulation of the medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995, that the priorities should be in keeping with the distinctive features and characteristics of the region and that the intensification of efforts in those programmes concerned with the agricultural and industrial sectors and in activities relating to food security, water and

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<sup>6/</sup> E/ESCWA/MTP/86/3.

<sup>7/</sup> E/ESCWA/C.1/14/9/Rev.1.

mineral resources, new and renewable sources of energy, science and technology (particularly advanced technology, information technology and informatics), social development and the development of human resources and administrative capabilities are among the priorities to be observed by the Commission in the formulation and implementation of its programmes within the limits of available resources, while taking action to realize the relative advantage of the Commission as a multi-disciplinary institution and to increase its effectiveness in the region so that it will be able to combine such priorities into a limited number of major focal points and apply to them an integrated approach;

(b) To submit to the Technical Committee at its sixth session a report on the implementation of the present recommendations.

Draft resolution 5

Holding of the sessions of the Economic and Social  
Commission for Western Asia on a biennial basis

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling paragraph 1 of its resolution 153(XIII) of 24 April 1986 requesting the secretariat to carry out a study on the possibility of amending rule 1(a) of the Commission's rules of procedure so that the session, meeting at the ministerial level, should normally be held every two years, provided that the said study should include details of the consequences of such an amendment for the activities and work of the Commission,

Recalling further the agreement reached by the members of the Commission in the light of that resolution that the fourteenth session should be held in 1987 and that sessions should subsequently be held on a biennial basis,

Aware of the importance of the new measures taken by the United Nations to improve the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization, to economize on financial resources and to curb expenditures because of the current financial crisis,

Desirous of committing itself to working within such a framework in order to promote the positive and constructive role to which it aspires in the economic and social development fields in the region of Western Asia,

Satisfied that holding the sessions of the Commission at the ministerial level on a biennial basis would coincide with the period of time covered by the Commission's programme of work and priorities, thereby providing both secretariat and members with greater opportunity to consider the outcome of a complete work programme,

1. Decides to amend paragraph 1(a) of the Commission's rules of procedure to read as follows:

"Dates of sessions

"Rule 1

"Sessions of the Commission shall be held:

"(a) Normally in April every other year, at a time to be determined by the members of the Commission;

" ... ";

2. Requests the Executive Secretary:

(a) To prepare in those years when no session is held a detailed report on the activities, plans and programmes of the Commission, including those of its subsidiary bodies (the Technical Committee), for submission to the Economic and Social Council so that the Council may remain fully informed;

(b) To communicate the said report to the Chairman of the Commission's session at the ministerial level and to the members of the Commission prior to its submission to the Economic and Social Council so that they may propose whatever amendments or additions they may deem necessary.

Draft resolution 6

Quorum for meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling rule 36 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which provides that "A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum",

Further recalling rule 19 of the Commission's rules of procedure, which provides that "Unless the Commission decides otherwise, these rules shall apply to subsidiary bodies as far as appropriate";

Desiring to ensure that the meetings of the Commission and of its subsidiary bodies are held as scheduled and in a convenient and effective manner, as is the custom in the other regional commissions and the main organs of the United Nations,

Decides to amend the rules of procedure of the Commission so that rule 36 will read as follows:

"Quorum

"Rule 36

"The Chairman may declare a meeting of the Commission or any of its subsidiary bodies open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one third of the members are present. The presence of a majority of the members shall be required for any decision to be taken."



**PART II**



## INTRODUCTION

1. The fifth session of the Technical Committee was opened by Mr. Ismail Al-Dulaymi, Chairman of the Committee's fourth session, on Tuesday, 31 March 1987 at 10.30 a.m.
2. The Executive Secretary of the Commission made an opening statement. After welcoming participants, he referred to the considerable challenges and difficult circumstances faced by the region, which were impeding the course of development. The lack of serious progress in the search for appropriate solutions to the question of Palestine, the continuation of the Iran-Iraq war and the aggravation of the crisis in Lebanon had had a negative impact on the security and economy of States in the region. There had also been negative economic developments as a result of falling oil prices, which had necessitated a review of development strategies and priorities in the region.
3. He mentioned the meeting convened by ESCWA at Amman, which was attended by a select group of experts and intellectuals from the region, to consider the medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995. The participants had agreed to call upon the Commission to play a prominent role as a think-tank and a focal point for the formulation of ideas concerning socio-economic development in the region.
4. He also referred to the financial crisis of the United Nations and the effect of that crisis on the Commission's activities as well as its ability to meet the region's needs.
5. The fifth session of the Technical Committee was called upon to examine the draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1988-1989. It was intended that the programme should constitute a link between the current medium-term plan and the forthcoming plan for the period 1990-1995, which was included in the agenda. The programme reflected changing economic conditions and their impact on possibilities for development, and particular attention had been accorded to social programmes.
6. The Committee was also called upon to examine the draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995, which was extremely important since it would determine the course of action to be taken by ESCWA over the first half of the coming decade. The document submitted for discussion, which covered only the general framework and priorities, had been redrafted in accordance with the conclusions reached at the meeting in Amman. The draft of the forthcoming plan laid particular emphasis on intersectoral activities, set out the major issues and problems and suggested programme priorities and specific areas of concentration.
7. The Technical Committee was called upon to review progress made in the implementation of the work programme. Attention was drawn to the achievements which had been recorded during 1986 despite the high rate of vacancies, over 35 per cent in the substantive divisions. Nevertheless, the continuing financial crisis of the United Nations and the freeze on recruitment had made it necessary to propose certain amendments to the work programme, which had been submitted to the Committee for discussion.

8. The agenda contained an item on follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission, including the important resolution relating to the amendment of the provisional rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia so that its sessions would be held on a biennial basis instead of every year. Priority was also accorded to the impact of changing conditions in the oil market and in currency exchange markets on economic policies, expatriate labour and the international financial and banking system.

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## I. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

1. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission: Progress made in the implementation of the work programme for the period 1986-1987

(Agenda item 6(a))

(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4(Part I)/Rev.1 and Corr.1-2 and Add.1,

E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4(Part II)/Rev.1 and Corr.1 and Add.1,

E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4/Add.1/Rev.1 and Corr.1 and Add.2-3)

9. The Executive Secretary reviewed the salient points of the documentation on the item before the Commission. He pointed out that ESCWA had been able, owing to the considerable efforts made by its staff and with the help of consultancy services financed from extrabudgetary resources, to complete 37 out of 43 outputs in the course of 1986, for a performance rate of 86 per cent. Significant progress had also been made on the completion of another 61 outputs, and the Commission had thus completed some 40 per cent of its work programme for the biennium 1986-1987 despite the continuing high rate of vacancies in substantive divisions.

10. In view of the continuing financial crisis and the recruitment freeze, the Executive Secretary proposed that the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1986-1987 should be amended so as to postpone implementation of seven outputs, to reformulate six others and to cancel 13, the number of amendments thus amounting to no more than 18 per cent of the total.

11. A number of representatives stressed the need for action to promote co-operation between the Commission and regional and subregional organizations in order to avoid duplication and economize on costs, particularly in view of the circumstances created by the financial crisis. The Executive Secretary welcomed that initiative and pointed out that ESCWA had already adopted such a course of action and had established contact with a number of regional and international organizations, including the Gulf Co-operation Council and UNESCO, with a view to reinforcing such co-operation with them. The Commission would pursue its efforts to co-ordinate co-operative action with other organizations through full group meetings.

12. He proposed that Palestine should be included in the category of the least developed countries of the region, as was the practice of the League of Arab States. The designation of such countries was made within a particular organizational framework, and the matter could be examined in accordance with the regulations of the United Nations if the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) were to submit a request in that regard.

13. Participants expressed their appreciation for the endeavours made by the secretariat to implement the work programme for the biennium 1986-1987.

2. Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission  
(Agenda item 6(b))(i) Commission resolution 138(XII) on the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific

(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.1)

14. The Executive Secretary reviewed the activities undertaken by the secretariat in the period 1985-1986 in observance of the Decade in Western Asia.

15. In reply to a question from one representative concerning the desired participation on the part of ESCWA member countries, the Executive Secretary stated that the intention was that member countries should participate in project identification and in securing the funding necessary for the implementation of new projects.

16. One representative called attention to the fact that the document on the item conveyed the impression that there was no assurance of obtaining sufficient funding for the implementation of programme element 1.6. The Executive Secretary pointed out that ESCWA was acting in co-operation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and that there was a specific project under study with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, which had expressed an interest in the Decade. Contacts had also been established with the International Civil Aviation Organization, and agreement had been reached on an extensive meeting with a view to profiting from the organization's capabilities.

17. A representative of the secretariat noted that there could be no assurance that the necessary financial resources for the Decade would be secured. The division concerned would within six months submit a full report on transport conditions and problems in the ESCWA region. It would then elaborate a strategy, focusing on the major areas of concern and identifying the projects required to supplement the development of the transport sector, for submission to member countries so that they might formulate practical projects relating to the priority sectors. It was expected that ESCWA would receive not less than one third of the 6 million dollars set aside by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It was the Commission's goal to ensure the complementarity of all efforts undertaken by the various organizations in the transport sector.

(ii) Commission resolution 142(XIII) on the programme  
of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.2)

18. The Executive Secretary reviewed the follow-up action taken by the secretariat with respect to resolution 142(XIII) to establish priorities within the limits of available resources in the light of the impact of changing conditions in the oil market and currency exchange markets on economic policies and development prospects, on expatriate labour and on international financial and banking systems in the region.

19. One representative inquired why the Commission's interest was confined to expatriate labour and the level of workers' remittances, while insufficient attention was devoted to the conditions in countries whose revenues had decreased and whose development had been affected by the fall in oil prices. The Executive Secretary replied that ESCWA would try to ensure balance in studying the problems of member countries, including oil producers, non-oil producers, labour-sending and labour-receiving countries. A survey of developments in the international oil market and their implications for the ESCWA oil producers had been included in the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1986-1987. A study on the impact of changing oil prices on energy policies and development prospects in the ESCWA region had been initiated.

20. One representative said that the lengthy studies carried out by ESCWA took a long time to complete. The conclusions they drew were thus out of date as they did not reflect current conditions. The Executive Secretary replied that ESCWA acted in accordance with specific programmes which were adopted by member countries and for which specific resources were allocated. It was difficult to alter these programmes between sessions of the Commission. However, ESCWA had begun to prepare short-term studies and data to reflect unforeseen developments which might be of use to decision-makers.

(iii) Commission resolution 143(XIII) on activities  
in the telecommunications sector  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.3)

21. The Executive Secretary reviewed the follow-up action of the Commission in implementation of resolution 143(XIII). The secretariat had completed two main undertakings in implementation of the resolution, as follows:

(a) The telecommunications sector had been integrated into the preparatory assistance project for the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific. The agreement designating ESCWA as the executing agency for the project had been signed by UNDP and ESCWA.

(b) A specific telecommunications subprogramme had been introduced in the proposed programme of work and priorities of the Commission for the coming biennium 1988-1989.

22. The Committee took note of these developments.

(iv) Commission resolution 144(XIII) on the filling of  
vacancies in the secretariat  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.4/Rev.1)

23. The Executive Secretary reviewed developments with regard to the problem of filling vacancies in the secretariat. The high rate of vacancies in substantive posts was the main reason why programme elements had remained uncompleted, been postponed until the coming biennium or cancelled. The freeze in recruitment caused by the financial crisis of the United Nations had in fact reversed the progress made by ESCWA in improving the vacancy situation in late 1985.

24. The Organization was attempting to achieve a balance in regard to vacancy rates through the implementation of a plan for the redistribution of vacant posts. He said that, as a result of the implementation of the plan, candidates from within the Organization would shortly be identified to fill vacant posts on a system-wide basis and the system would probably permit appointments to be made from outside the system in cases in which candidates from within the system were not available to fill priority posts.

25. The representatives expressed support for the measures that ESCWA was taking to fill vacancies and requested that emphasis should continue to be placed on the need to exempt ESCWA from the freeze on recruitment. They said that ESCWA should not be treated in the same way as other offices and duty stations since it had not yet reached the full staffing complement needed to implement its programmes effectively in a manner conducive to the region's development.

26. The Executive Secretary pointed out that the Trust Fund for ESCWA Regional Activities was approaching depletion and invited member States to continue contributing to that Fund.

(v) Commission resolution 145(XIII) on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian Arab people under occupation  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.5)

27. The Executive Secretary informed the Committee that ESCWA had included data and information on the occupied Palestinian territories in its periodic reports and had prepared three studies in the fields of vocational training, the development of financial structures and activities and the marketing of agricultural produce in the occupied Palestinian territories.

28. The participants commended those endeavours and recommended that efforts should be continued in keeping with the spirit of that resolution and that member countries and other bodies concerned should be provided with the studies and publications issued in that connection.

(vi) Commission resolution 146(XIII) on the general study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian people  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.6)

29. The Executive Secretary informed the Committee that in implementation of that resolution the Commission had published a summary of the study (E/ESCWA/85/IG.1/WP.1/Rev.1), which had been approved by the Intergovernmental Meeting in 1985 and adopted at the previous session, and would be publishing the individual parts of the general study in two series in the course of 1987.

30. During the discussions that took place, some members indicated that a socio-economic development programme should be formulated for the Palestinian people in the light of the results of the study and submitted to the United Nations so that the requirements for its implementation could be met. Other members stressed the importance of publishing the study or a summary thereof in collaboration with the PLO. Another representative indicated that Jordan already had an integrated development programme and an ongoing planning process for the occupied territories which should be taken into consideration in future.



31. The representative of UNEP pointed out that the United Nations Secretariat was preparing a system-wide programme of assistance for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories in co-operation with the programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations. He explained that consultations would be held with the States concerned and with the leadership of the PLO during the preparation of the programme which would be submitted to the Economic and Social Council during the coming summer and subsequently to the General Assembly at its forty-second session.

(vii) Commission resolution 147 (XIII) on the United Nations  
Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation  
in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.7/Rev.1)

32. The Executive Secretary reviewed the action taken by ESCWA in implementation of the resolution, as contained in the above-mentioned document.

33. One representative said that, in paragraph 6 of resolution 147(XIII), the Commission had called upon member countries and upon the Executive Secretary to "redouble their efforts...with the aim of establishing an international system reinforcing the principles that proscribe armed aggression against nuclear installations dedicated to peaceful purposes...with a view to preventing a repetition of armed Israeli aggression against Iraqi or other nuclear installations". He wished to know what had been done in that respect since no indication had been given in the document and inquired as to the nature of co-operation between ESCWA and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in regard to the proposed programmes.

34. Another representative referred to the importance of co-operation between ESCWA, country atomic authorities and IAEA in regard to averting the dangers of radiation pollution and ensuring the establishment of regulations and standards to prevent the circulation of foodstuffs polluted with nuclear radiation. He added that the Environmental Co-ordination Unit at ESCWA could provide assistance in that respect.

35. In reply to the first comment, the representative of the secretariat explained that the study prepared by ESCWA contained details on that subject and that ESCWA had contributed to the work of the Preparatory Committee of the Conference, which had included the drafting of texts for submission to the United Nations Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy which was currently being held in Geneva. These texts were compatible with the contents of paragraph 6 of resolution 147(XIII). In reply to the second point, he said that the establishment of a joint ESCWA/IAEA unit was still merely an idea, although the Agency had promised to look into the matter and endeavours were being made to implement some joint projects such as the project for the utilization of isotopes for ground-water exploration and evaluation. With regard to the question of ESCWA playing a role in averting the dangers of radiation pollution, he pointed out that ESCWA had collected and was currently studying a series of papers prepared by the Agency for a number of meetings that it had organized.

(viii) Commission resolution 148(XIII) on the interregional  
consultation on developmental social  
welfare policies and programmes  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.8)

36. The Executive Secretary reviewed action taken in regard to that resolution.

37. One representative expressed the view that the above-mentioned document should have referred to the Cairo Declaration and the report issued by the high-level meeting, particularly in regard to the Trust Fund. He added that ESCWA could help to draw up a list of projects which the experts could use as guidelines.

38. A number of representatives rejected the part relating to migrant labour in the summary of the study annexed to the document since the study, which had never been approved, focused on the negative aspects, which had been exaggerated, and failed to show the positive aspects. They said that, when such studies were conducted, the countries concerned should be consulted before they were published as documents. The Executive Secretary replied that the study was in two parts: regional consultations and a summary of the study. With regard to the first part, the secretariat submitted those policies to the Technical Committee for consideration whereas the second part was a summary of a study which had been prepared by a consultant. The study had been neither approved nor published and did not constitute an official document issued by the Commission; it had been submitted solely in order to indicate the Commission's concern with social issues, as directed, and to seek the views of delegations in that connection.

39. One representative proposed that the consideration of social issues by ESCWA should be confined to one or two topics at each session since it was impossible to cover all the social issues at a single session.

40. The delegation of Iraq made some comments on the Iraqi experience in the field of social welfare.

41. The representative of the secretariat explained that the study did not necessarily reflect the views of the secretariat and the purpose in submitting the summary was to seek the Committee's opinion on its contents in order to formulate a regional conception of social welfare policies and programmes with a view to participating in the interregional consultations that would be held in the coming autumn. He said that the study would be reviewed, transmitted to the members of ESCWA for comment and prepared as a document for submission during the interregional consultations.

42. The Chairman of the Technical Committee said that it was evident that the summary of the study was unacceptable to the Technical Committee. He proposed the adoption of the first part, which contained a general outline of the developmental social welfare policies and programmes, and the submission of a recommendation that the study should be completed after consultation with the countries concerned in order to give an objective, scientific and balanced picture of the negative and positive aspects of migrant labour.

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43. The Technical Committee adopted the Chairman's proposal.

(ix) Commission resolution 149(XIII) on the  
financial status of the Commission  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.9)

44. The Executive Secretary said that technical discussion of this subject would take place during the ministerial meeting under agenda item (9). The document submitted under this agenda item should be read in conjunction with that submitted under agenda item 6(b) (iv) on the filling of vacancies in the secretariat, since Commission resolution 149(XIII) related to the Commission's needs both with regard to human and to financial resources. The generous financial support received from Headquarters had, however, enabled the Commission to effect the relocation of its International General Service staff from their temporary accommodation to individual residences. The relocation had been of considerable help in improving the living and social conditions of ESCWA staff.

45. The Committee took note of the contents of the document under consideration.

(x) Commission resolution 150(XIII) on policy issues affecting operational  
activities of the United Nations system for  
development: 1986 triennial review  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.10)

46. The Executive Secretary said that the Secretary-General of the United Nations had drawn up a comprehensive report on the triennial review of operational activities, which had been distributed to all States Members of the United Nations. In accordance with the Commission resolution, the report had been summarized for use by ESCWA member countries. He asked the Committee to leave decisions on this review to the General Assembly, in order to avoid any possible duplication or inconsistency in positions.

47. The Committee took note of the contents of the document under consideration.

(xi) Commission resolution 152(XIII) on the request for  
the relocation of the Commission  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.11/Rev.1)

48. The Executive Secretary reviewed the latest developments in connection with the request to relocate the headquarters of the Commission and said that the Iraqi Government had allocated to the Commission the building currently occupied by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

49. A member of the Iraqi delegation said that the new building allocated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be completed shortly. Discussions were under way between the authorities concerned (the Ministry of Education) and the secretariat concerning the identification of a suitable building for the Baghdad International School with a view to ensuring that appropriate facilities were made available for the School.

50. One representative proposed that ESCWA members should express their gratitude and appreciation to the Iraqi Government for the facilities it had provided, and was continuing to provide, to the Commission. This proposal was adopted by the Committee.

(xii) Commission resolution 153(XIII) on the amendment of the provisional rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia  
(E/ESCWA/14/5/Add.12)

51. The Executive Secretary reviewed the contents of the above-mentioned document.

52. One representative requested that the phrase "in April" in the penultimate line of the document should be replaced by "beginning on the third Saturday of April".

53. One representative asked whether the arrangement to meet every other year would also apply to the Technical Committee. The Executive Secretary replied that the amendment would apply both to the Technical Committee and to the ministerial session. ESCWA could convene extraordinary meetings during the two-year period if circumstances so demanded. One representative requested that invitations should be issued at least one month before any such meeting, in order to allow time for the necessary administrative arrangements.

54. The amendment was adopted, taking account of the comments made by members.

Follow-up action at the regional level  
on United Nations world conferences and ESCWA regional meetings  
(Agenda item 7)  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/6 and Add.1)

55. The Executive Secretary reviewed the results achieved at regional intergovernmental meetings organized by the Commission.

(a) Regional Intergovernmental Technical Meeting on New and Renewable Sources of Energy

56. The representative of Iraq referred to the meeting held at Amman to review the studies and proposals drawn up by the ESCWA secretariat on new and renewable sources of energy. He said that his country would be prepared to act as host to the New and Renewable Sources of Energy Information Network and would like to participate in the projects proposed in paragraphs 6(b),(c) and (h) of document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/6.

57. The representative of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) said that his organization welcomed co-operation with the Commission on all matters of joint interest. He affirmed the interest of OAPEC in the New and Renewable Sources of Energy Information Network. He proposed that a meeting of the parties concerned should be held and that OAPEC should be invited to attend.

58. One representative noted that one of the most important conclusions reached at the Second Arab Energy Conference in Qatar in 1982 and the Third Arab Energy Conference at Algiers in 1985 was that future demand for Arab oil would register a large increase. It would therefore be necessary to conserve oil resources and to control oil consumption in the coming decades by developing new and renewable sources of energy with a view to reducing the consumption of oil and gas.

59. The representative of the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils said that the Federation was interested in the development of new and renewable sources of energy. A seminar was to be held in 1987 on the importance of exploiting biomass energy and another was to be held on prospects for the use of wind energy in the Arab world. The Federation would support the Third International Arab Solar Energy Conference, to be held at Baghdad at the beginning of 1988. The secretariat of the Federation had published a study on the patents situation with respect to solar components, which would be followed by further publications on solar energy. The Federation supported the Commission's efforts in the field of new and renewable sources of energy and was ready and willing to participate in future action to be undertaken by ESCWA in this regard.

(b) Second Meeting of Heads of Central Statistical Organizations in the ESCWA Region

60. One representative said that the Second Meeting of Heads of Central Statistical Organizations had produced recommendations which were submitted for consideration by the Technical Committee. He proposed that the recommendations of the Tripartite Review Meeting on regional household survey project RAB/80/009, held from 28 to 30 March 1987, should be linked to them.

61. One representative said that the Tripartite Review Meeting had recommended that UNDP should finance the household surveys in ESCWA countries for the period 1981-1991. He said that UNDP had agreed to provide financing up to December 1987 and requested the submission of a recommendation that UNDP should continue to fund the surveys up to the end of 1991.

62. One representative said it had been recommended that the necessary funding should be ensured for implementation of the project on external migration statistics and preparation of the relevant methodological handbook. The recommendation was supported by a number of other representatives.

63. The Executive Secretary said that the secretariat would take the comments expressed by members of the Committee into consideration. The secretariat was keen to maintain the National Household Survey Capability Programme and to ensure funding for the Programme up to the end of 1991. The secretariat would also ensure funding for action on the external migration statistics project.

64. The draft resolution relating to the strengthening of national household survey capabilities (see part I, chapter II, draft resolution 2) was presented to the Committee. The Committee adopted the draft resolution.

(c) Intergovernmental Technical Meeting on Food Security

65. One representative noted that the subject of food security had been the focal point of the session of the Arab Economic and Social Council held at Amman as well as of the session held at Riyadh. He requested that the secretariat make particular efforts with respect to that issue, since Arab countries had devoted their attention to it. Radiation pollution was causing many problems, particularly in countries belonging to the Gulf Co-operation Council, and goods were being exported to those countries after having been exposed to nuclear radiation. He called on the Executive Secretary to devote attention to the issue and to increase co-ordination with all Arab and regional organizations. He also requested the preparation of a suitable resolution on the subject.

66. The Technical Committee took note of documents E/ESCWA/C.1/14/6 and Add.1, taking into account the comments which had been made by representatives.

Co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations

(Agenda item 8)

(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/7)

67. The Executive Secretary submitted to the Committee the activities and endeavours that the secretariat had undertaken to promote co-operation among developing countries and with regional and international organizations in keeping with the objective of furthering self-reliance among the countries of the region and between them and other developing countries. He referred in particular to the contacts that had been established with a number of regional and international organizations with a view to reaching an understanding concerning the co-ordination of co-operation between ESCWA and those organizations.

68. The representative of the Saudi Fund for Development referred to the assistance that the Fund was providing for ESCWA countries with a view to furthering development objectives in the region. The representative of the Iraqi Fund for External Development stressed the need to strengthen the links between ESCWA and Arab funds for development and finance. There was ample scope for co-operation between the Commission and those funds, since they usually provided technical assistance but did not have the experts needed for such activity.

69. The representative of the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils welcomed the recent intensification of co-operation between ESCWA and the Federation, namely the preparation of draft proposals for joint research projects to be carried out by Arab scientific research centres. He expressed the hope that this co-operation would extend to other areas, including new and renewable sources of energy, the environment, water resources, documentation, information and technology, as well as the updating of the Directory of Arab Scientific Research Centres published by the Federation, which was being co-ordinated with the ESCWA project to update its directory of centres, institutions and agencies for study and research.

70. Most members expressed their deep appreciation of the endeavours made by ESCWA in that connection and recommended the strengthening and continuation of co-operation with regional organizations.

Draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1988-1989

(Agenda item 9)

(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/8 and Corr.1-2)

71. The Executive Secretary said that the programme of work and priorities for the biennium had been drafted in such a way as to further the objectives of the medium-term plan for 1984-1989 of which the programme constituted an integral part. The programme also formed a connecting link between that plan and the next medium-term plan.

72. He referred in particular to some of the new activities contained in the programme, such as the analytical studies of changing economic conditions and their effect on the region's future development potential, the role of financial markets and their effect in promoting joint investment among the Arab countries, and the diversification of sources of national income in the ESCWA oil-exporting countries. He said that the social development programme and activities relating to human resources development had been expanded, coinciding with development of information systems and advanced technology.

73. Due regard had been paid to the policy of concentrating resources on a limited number of priority activities, strengthening multi-disciplinary programmes and expanding practical activities.

74. In view of the probable continuation of the financial crisis facing the United Nations, considerable changes might have to be made in the programme.

75. A number of members referred to the fact that, although the proposed programme was ambitious, its implementation depended on the filling of vacancies and the facilitation of recruitment procedures in the secretariat and those requirements seemed unlikely to be met in view of the present financial crisis at the United Nations. They proposed the establishment of clearly defined programme priorities so that the secretariat would be able to modify the programme of work in the light of the actual circumstances.

76. Several members made detailed proposals concerning elements of the programme of work. Those proposals included:

A. Food and agriculture

(a) ESCWA should help the bodies concerned in member States to formulate country programmes for a specific number of basic food crops in which production cycles were linked to processing and marketing, such as wheat, rice, millet and potato crops;

(b) ESCWA should help in the development of technology for the economical use of scarce surface and ground water for irrigation and the development of natural rangeland and desert vegetation for pasturage;

(c) ESCWA should help to formulate programmes to combat plant epidemics, pests and weeds;

(d) ESCWA should study the problems involved in the cleansing of irrigation and drainage channels and ways and means of using drainage water for domestic and agricultural purposes;

(e) ESCWA should help to develop agricultural training and guidance programmes with a view to developing individual tools and methods of production and selecting types of technology that were compatible with the size of small production units;

(f) ESCWA should help in the preparation of programmes for the dissemination of information concerning successful practical experiments in the field of production technology and methods;

(g) ESCWA should be requested to prepare a report, in collaboration with IAEA and other country, regional and international bodies concerned, on methods of co-operation between countries that exported foodstuffs, animal feedstock and other goods and countries in the region which imported such items, in order to apply standards and regulations for the prevention of the circulation of foodstuffs contaminated with large quantities of nuclear radiation in markets of the ESCWA region;

77. The representative of Iraq expressed his country's wish to be selected for the implementation of a training programme to combat desertification. He also proposed that Iraq should be one of the countries selected for the conduct of a study on the co-ordination and formulation of food plans and policies and for the implementation of a project for the evaluation of rural development projects and programmes.

#### B. Human settlements

ESCWA should study the following subjects:

The regulation of land use and the preservation of green spaces in urban areas;

Basic urban planning and the formulation of structural plans for urban areas;

The preparation of programmes and studies concerning the economics of town size and the optimum economic/social/population size of the major cities in the countries of the region;

Studies on population mobility, urbanization and urban and rural settlement plans in the countries of the region;



The place balance in development;

Principles and criteria for the distribution of economic, social and service activities;

The placing of emphasis in regard to housing and building materials on prefabricated construction, the satisfaction of urgent needs, ways to reduce production costs, the provision of housing of acceptable standards, and ways to establish environmentally appropriate design systems.

#### C. Environment

ESCWA should devote attention to:

The establishment of guideline criteria and standards for the avoidance of pollution;

Assistance in the utilization of appropriate methods to combat pollution;

Support for environmental management in urban communities;

Support for the regional meeting on environmental management and institutional capabilities, as referred to in the draft programme of work and priorities;

Support for the programme element relating to the provision of technical assistance on environmental matters to member countries;

A request that UNEP should continue to provide institutional support to the ESCWA environment programme, at least for the next two years.

#### D. Industrial development

Priority should be accorded to helping the countries of the region in their industrial planning endeavours, especially in regard to the improvement of regional co-ordination in industrial sectors.

#### E. Population

ESCWA should help member States in the field of manpower statistics, particularly in regard to inter-census surveys, in order to provide information on manpower during such periods.

#### F. Public administration and finance

78. The representative of the Arab Monetary Fund proposed that the study on financial markets in the ESCWA region (programme element 1.2) should be carried out in collaboration with the Fund.

#### G. Science and technology

(a) First priority should be given to programme element 2.2 (The role of public enterprises in the acquisition of technology in selected countries of the ESCWA region), in view of the fact that the public sector represented the principal investor and largest user of technology, particularly of imported technology, in regional States.

(b) Programme element 1.2 (Specialized financial institutions and development of endogenous scientific and technological capabilities) should include a study of appropriate institutional structures and organizational frameworks for the development of technological capabilities.

#### H. Social and human resources development

Study sessions should be organized on aspects of social and human resources development, to promote the direct exchange of experience rather than limiting action to studies and publications.

#### I. Statistics

ESCWA should provide technical assistance in the following fields:

Development of systems for the estimation of output at constant prices, so as to ensure the calculation of exports on the basis of their true purchasing power;

Development of external trade data so as to facilitate the calculation of comparative figures for import prices;

Development of statistical data banks in member countries through the use of computers;

Expansion of the programme to strengthen national household survey capabilities, so as to include assistance to States in expanding their efforts and uses of household surveys with a view to the preparation of data on the demographic situation and the measurement of changes in household structures, labour and nutrition surveys.

#### J. Transnational corporations

Output (i) required the submission of a report to the Commission in the final quarter of 1987 on the United Nations code of conduct relating to transnational corporations. The report would then be made available for use by organizations in the region.

79. The Executive Secretary expressed his appreciation for the statements and proposals made by members of the Committee and said that the secretariat would try to implement them, within the limits of its terms of reference. If it was not possible to do so during the biennium 1988-1989, they would be taken into account in the medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995.

80. In conclusion, the majority of members of the Committee congratulated the secretariat on its efforts in preparing the draft programme of work and priorities and adopted the draft programme, taking into account the above-mentioned comments.

Draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995:  
General framework and priorities  
(Agenda item 10)  
(E/ESCWA/C.1/14/9/Rev.1)

81. The Executive Secretary introduced the draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995 with a statement in which he referred to the nature of planning and programming within the context of the United Nations which establishes its programme budgets on the basis of six-year medium-term plans that reflect the resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the regional commissions.

82. He said that the draft plan, which had been prepared in the light of the experience gained during the implementation of the current medium-term plan, took into consideration regional and international variables and future projections. It had been drawn up and revised on the basis of the results achieved at the Meeting of Eminent Persons that ESCWA had convened at Amman in January 1987. He emphasized that the draft plan constituted a new departure in regard to the considerable importance that it attached to intersectoral activities and said that it differed from the previous plan in so far as it showed renewed concern for the mineral resources sector and highlighted appropriate and effective technology, advanced informatics, human resources development, concentration on the production sectors and the more extensive study of various social issues.

83. Most members of the Committee commended the efforts made in the preparation of the draft plan. A number of observations were made with regard to the overview contained in the introduction to the draft plan to the effect that it did not sufficiently reflect the achievements and positive aspects of development in the region in the past, did not accord the ongoing wars the attention they deserved and did not sufficiently elucidate the impact of such wars and conflicts on the economies of the countries of the region and on the development process. Other representatives expressed satisfaction with the realistic analysis and diagnosis given in the introduction to the document and commended the characterization of development in which man was the ultimate goal. Some members made observations on the contents of the plan and a large number requested that the opportunity be given for more leisurely study of the draft by the competent authorities in their home countries on the understanding that they would communicate their comments to the secretariat within a limited period of time.

84. The Executive Secretary thanked members for their valuable observations and called attention to the need for the general framework to be approved before submission, together with the plans of the other regional commissions, to the United Nations. He stressed that sufficient time would be allowed for detailed study of the draft plan and noted that the secretariat was prepared to receive all the observations and comments of member countries and to take them into consideration.

85. Accordingly, the Committee adopted a draft resolution on the draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995 (see part I, chapter II, draft resolution 4). Members called for the introduction to the document to address itself to the inherent capacities of the countries of the region and the efforts made by members in the past and to stress the importance of existing circumstances in the region and the impact of the prolonged wars and conflicts on the development process there (see also part I, paragraph 14).

86. The delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization submitted its preliminary observations in writing, requesting the secretariat to include in its programme of work and priorities in the coming years a number of activities relating to the economic and social situation of the Palestinian people and to give priority to the following: the food industries, especially those based on locally-grown agricultural products; a pre-feasibility study on the establishment of a number of training and production centres for the mechanical, electrical, textile and woodworking industries; the development of maritime fisheries; a study of the present capabilities of the research centres and scientific laboratories in the occupied territories, particularly those at Palestinian universities and which have some connection with industry, and their development; and the possible conduct of a comprehensive industrial survey in the occupied Palestinian territories in co-operation with the relevant Arab and international organizations.

87. The secretariat promised to take those observations into account, together with those of other members, within the limits of available resources.

Discussion of the items on the provisional agenda of the ministerial meeting of the fourteenth session of the Commission

(Agenda item 11)  
(E/ESCWA/14/L.1)

88. The Secretary of the Commission introduced the proposed agenda for the ministerial meeting of the fourteenth session of the Commission, and it was approved for submission.

89. One representative said that the report of the Committee, or a summary thereof, should be read out to the ministerial meeting in order to facilitate its work. In connection with item 11 of the proposed agenda, he called attention to the importance of the secretariat carrying out studies on the economic and social impact of migrant labour on the labour-receiving countries, since it had already completed studies on the economic and social impact of return migration on some of the labour-sending countries.

90. The Executive Secretary responded that the special topic for the Commission's next session would deal with four of the labour-receiving countries in the region.

91. The Committee decided to approve the provisional agenda for the ministerial meeting while taking account of the observations made.

Other matters  
(Agenda item 12)

(a) Quorum for the meetings of the Commission and  
its subsidiary bodies

92. The Secretary of the Commission introduced the note by the Executive Secretary contained in document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/10/Rev.1, in which the secretariat proposed that the Commission's rules of procedure should be amended so that rule 36 would read: "The Chairman may declare a meeting of the Commission or any of its subsidiary bodies open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one third of the members are present. The presence of a majority of the members shall be required for any decision to be taken."

93. The Committee approved the amendment.

(b) In-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure  
and functions in the economic and social sectors

94. The Committee took note of the contents of document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/11.

## II. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE FIFTH SESSION

### A. Place and date of the session

95. The fifth session of the Technical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia was held at the Commission's headquarters in Baghdad from 31 March to 2 April 1987 to review the items on the agenda set forth in section E below and to make recommendations in that regard to the Commission at its fourteenth session. Its work covered five meetings.

### B. Attendance<sup>1/</sup>

96. The session was attended by representatives of the following members of the Commission: Bahrain, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

97. By virtue of rule 63 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Commission, the following States Members of the United Nations or of the specialized agencies not members of the Commission participated in a consultative capacity in the work of the fifth session of the Technical Committee: China; Czechoslovakia; Djibouti; France; German Democratic Republic; Germany, Federal Republic of; Hungary; India; Indonesia; Poland; Romania; Sudan; Switzerland; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; and United States of America.

98. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attended the session as observers: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); International Labour Organisation (ILO); International Telecommunication Union (ITU); United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); World Food Programme (WFP); and World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

99. Representatives of the following governmental and non-governmental regional organizations also attended the session as observers: Arab Federation for Engineering Industries; Arab Federation for Food Industries; Arab Federation of Shipping; Arab Industrial Development Organization; Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics; Arab Labour Organization; Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization; Arab Literacy and Adult Education Organization; Arab Monetary Fund; Arab Planning Institute - Kuwait; Arab Standardization and Metrology Organization; Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils; and Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries.

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<sup>1/</sup> For the names of participants in the session, see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/INF.2/Rev.2.

100. Representatives of the Iraqi Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Iraqi Fund for External Development and the Saudi Fund for Development also attended the session as observers.

101. A representative of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance also attended the session as an observer.

### C. Credentials

102. The credentials of the representatives of member States and of other States and organizations participating in the fifth session of the Technical Committee were examined and found to be in order.<sup>1/</sup>

### D. Election of officers (Agenda item 2)

103. The Committee unanimously elected the head of the Iraqi delegation as Chairman of the session, the head of the Syrian delegation as Vice-Chairman and the head of the Egyptian delegation as Rapporteur.

### E. Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 3)

104. At its 1st meeting, held on 31 March 1987, the Technical Committee adopted the provisional agenda contained in document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/L.1/Rev.2, as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Organization of work.
5. Invitation to States Members of the United Nations or of the specialized agencies not members of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in the fifth session of the Technical Committee.
6. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission.
  - (a) Progress made in the implementation of the work programme for the period 1986-1987;
  - (b) Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission: (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Rev.1).
    - (i) Commission resolution 138(XII) on the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.1);

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<sup>1/</sup> First meeting held on 31 March 1987.

- (ii) Commission resolution 142(XIII) on the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987 (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.2);
- (iii) Commission resolution 143(XIII) on activities in the telecommunications sector (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.3);
- (iv) Commission resolution 144(XIII) on the filling of vacancies in the secretariat (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.4/ Rev.1);
- (v) Commission resolution 145(XIII) on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian Arab people under occupation (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.5);
- (vi) Commission resolution 146(XIII) on the general study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian people (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.6);
- (vii) Commission resolution 147(XIII) on the United Nations Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.7/Rev.1);
- (viii) Commission resolution 148(XIII) concerning interregional consultation on developmental social welfare policies and programmes (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.8);
- (ix) Commission resolution 149(XIII) on the financial status of the Commission (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.9);
- (x) Commission resolution 150(XIII) on policy issues affecting operational activities of the United Nations system for development: 1986 triennial review (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.10);
- (xi) Commission resolution 152(XIII) on the request for the relocation of the Commission (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.11/Rev.1);
- (xii) Commission resolution 153(XIII) on the amendment of the provisional rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (see document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.12).

7. Follow-up action at the regional level on United Nations world conferences and ESCWA regional meetings.

8. Co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations.

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9. Draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1988-1989.
10. Draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995.
11. Discussion of the items on the provisional agenda of the ministerial meeting of the fourteenth session of the Commission.
12. Other matters.
13. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

F. Organization of work  
(Agenda item 4)

105. At its 1st meeting, held on 31 March 1987, the Committee adopted the proposed organization of work contained in document E/ESCWA/C.1/14/2.

G. Adoption of the report of the Technical Committee on the work of its fifth session  
(Agenda item 13)

106. At its 5th meeting, held on 2 April 1987, the Committee adopted its report to the fourteenth session of the Commission and authorized the Rapporteur to incorporate therein any editorial changes that might be required.

Annex

LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
AT ITS FIFTH SESSION

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/1	3	Agenda
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/L.1/Rev.2/ Add.1	3	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/2	4	Proposed organization of work
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/3/Rev.1	5	Invitation to States Members of the United Nations or of the specialized agencies not members of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in the fifth session of the Technical Committee <u>Note by the Executive Secretary</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4(Part I) /Rev.1 and Corr.1 and 2	6(a)	Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission: progress made in the implementation of the work programme for the period 1986-1987
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4(Part I) /Rev.1/Add.1	6(a)	Programme performance and proposed modifications <u>Note by the Executive Secretary</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4/(Part II) /Rev.1 and Corr.1 and Add.1	6(a)	Technical co-operation activities and technical assistance projects
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4/Add.1/Rev.1 and Corr.1	6(a)	Identification of specific projects for promoting mature solar and wind technologies
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4/Add.2	6(a)	Policy aspects of regional transport development strategy and elements of transport planning
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/4/Add.3	6(a)	Harmonization and standardization in the field of land transport
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Rev.1	6(b)	Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission: Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission

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<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.1	6(b)	(i) Commission resolution 138(XII) on the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.2	6(b)	(ii) Commission resolution 142(XIII) on the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.3	6(b)	(iii) Commission resolution 143(XIII) on activities in the telecommunications sector
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.4/Rev.1	6(b)	(iv) Commission resolution 144(XIII) on the filling of vacancies in the secretariat
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.5	6(b)	(v) Commission resolution 145(XIII) on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian Arab people under occupation
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.6	6(b)	(vi) Commission resolution 146(XIII) on the general study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian people
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.7/Rev.1	6(b)	(vii) Commission resolution 147(XIII) on the United Nations Conference for the Promotion of International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.8	6(b)	(viii) Commission resolution 148(XIII) concerning interregional consultation on developmental social welfare policies and programmes
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.9	6(b)	(ix) Commission resolution 149(XIII) on the financial status of the Commission
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.10	6(b)	(x) Commission resolution 150(XIII) on policy issues affecting operational activities of the United Nations system for development : 1986 triennial review
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.11/Rev.1	6(b)	(xi) Commission resolution 152(XIII) on the request for the relocation of the Commission

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/5/Add.12	6(b)	(xii) Commission resolution 153(XIII) on the amendment of the provisional rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/6 and Add.1	7	Follow-up action at the regional level on United Nations world conferences and ESCWA regional meetings  (a) Regional Intergovernmental Technical Meeting on New and Renewable Sources of Energy  (b) Second Meeting of Heads of Central Statistical Organizations in the ESCWA Region  (c) Intergovernmental Technical Meeting on Food Security <u>Note by the Executive Secretary</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/7	8	Co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations <u>Note by the Executive Secretary</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/8 and Corr.1-2	9	Draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1988-1989
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/9/Rev.1	10	Draft medium-term plan for the period 1990-1995: General framework and priorities
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/10/Rev.1	12	Quorum for meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies <u>Note by the Executive Secretary</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/11	12	In-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social sectors <u>Note by the Executive Secretary</u>
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/12(Parts I and II)/Rev.1	13	Report of the Technical Committee on the work of its fifth session
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/INF.1/Rev.2	-	Provisional list of documents
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/INF.2/Rev.2	-	Provisional list of participants