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UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA

15 MAY 1975

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SITE OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMISSION

Note by the Secretariat

(Item 10 of the provisional agenda)

1. At its first special session held in Beirut 9-10 September 1974, the Commission approved resolution 6(S-1) ^{1/} on the site of the headquarters of the Commission. The resolution contained four decisions, namely, (i) the final decision on a permanent headquarters should be taken in 1976, while the item would remain on the agenda of the current session; (ii) member States interested in hosting the Commission headquarters should submit proposals as to the material and other facilities they would be prepared to make available to meet the Commission's needs; (iii) Beirut should be the provisional headquarters of ECWA for a period of five years from the adoption of the resolution and; (iv) the Lebanese Government should, during the transitional period, provide all the material and other facilities to enable the Commission to fulfil its mandate. For ease of reference, resolution 6(S-1) is reproduced as an annex to this note. ^{2/}

2. As regards operative paragraph one of the above-mentioned resolution, member States will recall that the Secretariat distributed, for consideration

^{1/} E/5589 or E/ECWA/12 of 1 October 1974

^{2/} Annex I.

by the first special session, a document setting forth the requirements of a permanent headquarters for ECWA ^{3/}. That document contained, inter alia, a questionnaire which member States desiring to host the Commission's headquarters were invited to fill out and transmit to the Commission Secretariat. However, so far no member State has submitted proposals for hosting the permanent headquarters of ECWA as called for in paragraph one of resolution 6(S-1).

3. In order for the Commission to make its recommendation during the 1976 regular session at the latest, it would be necessary for detailed proposals to be received by the Secretariat as soon as possible and preferably before the end of 1975, in order to allow for comments by the United Nations Headquarters, New York, and by the ECWA Secretariat and for timely translation and distribution to member States.

4. Following the adoption of resolution 6(S-1) in September 1974, officials of the Secretariat of ECWA established contacts with officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lebanon to discuss the material and other facilities which the Lebanese Government would be prepared to place at the disposal of ECWA during the transitional period of five years. The Secretariat of ECWA is now in a position to report that it was informed on 5 April 1975 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the Government of Lebanon would contribute annually the amount of one million Lebanese pounds (LL.1,000,000) towards the accommodation and other costs of the ECWA Secretariat.

5. The task of grouping into a single building the ECWA offices now scattered around five different locations is not easy. On the one hand, office buildings are very scarce in Beirut and when they exist the rent is out of reach. On the other hand, most buildings are meant for apartments. The usable space therein is limited and they would require extensive alterations before they

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Resolution 6 (S-I) Site of the headquarters of the Commission

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Having considered the question of selecting the permanent headquarters of the Commission,

Taking into consideration the time needed for undertaking studies and for preparing designs and executing the construction works,

Decides that:

1. The 1976 regular session should be considered the final deadline for selecting the permanent headquarters of the Commission provided that the subject remains until that time as an item on its agenda;
2. Member States wishing to act as hosts for the Commission's permanent headquarters should submit, at the earliest possible time, their proposals with regard to the material and other facilities which they would undertake to make available to meet the Commission's needs;
3. With effect from the date of this resolution, Beirut shall be the provisional headquarters of the Commission for a period of five years during which the permanent headquarters shall have been selected and the premises constructed for the Commission to perform its basic functions;
4. During this transitional period the Lebanese Government shall provide the Commission with all the material and other facilities to enable it to implement its planned work programme and projects.

1st meeting

9 September 1974

could be used for offices. Moreover, none of the buildings inspected so far provides a possibility for a large conference room, thus putting ECWA and its member States at the mercy of Beirut hotels and, in particular, the major ones which can meet the minimum conference requirements.

Despite these serious difficulties, the Secretariat is hopeful that it will be able to find accommodation by the end of 1975.