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REFERENCES

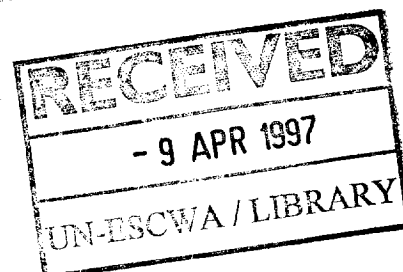


UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.  
GENERAL  
E/ECWA/38  
7 August 1976  
Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

ECWA SECOND SPECIAL SESSION  
22 - 23 August 1976  
Doha, Qatar



REPORT ON  
THE PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS OF ECWA

76-537

REPORT ON THE PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS OF ECWA

1. Member States will recall that at its third session held in Doha, Qatar, from 10 to 15 May 1976, the Commission approved resolution 22 (III) of 12 May 1976 on the site of the permanent headquarters of the Economic Commission for Western Asia.<sup>1/</sup> Among other provisions, the above resolution

(a) decided to postpone the final decision on the site of the permanent headquarters to a special session to be held in Doha on 21 August 1976 and,

(b) called upon the Executive Secretary to prepare a report on the financial implications to the United Nations of the offers presented by Lebanon, Iraq and Syria.

2. In response to the request contained in paragraph 1(b) above, a team composed of the Chief of Administration of ECWA and the Chief of Buildings Management Service of the Office of General Services, United Nations Headquarters, New York, conducted site inspections at Baghdad, Iraq and Damascus, Syria in mid-June 1976. Although the Commission has before it three offers,<sup>2/</sup> one from Lebanon, one from Iraq and one from Syria, the team was unable to visit the site in Lebanon at this time due to conditions that existed in the country. However, the team had visited the site in 1974 while evaluating interim accommodation for ECWA in Beirut.

3. The team would like to express its sincere gratitude to representatives of the Iraqi and Syrian governments who made available technical staff and

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<sup>1/</sup> E/5785 (E/ECWA/37) page 21

<sup>2/</sup> E/ECWA/33: E/ECWA/L.24 and E/ECWA/L.24 Add.1; E/ECWA/L.25.

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furnished all background information requested. This assistance greatly facilitated the work of the team, permitting it to complete the assignment expeditiously.

4. This report concentrates mainly on two essential items, namely the amount of land offered and the financial contribution to be made towards the construction of the permanent headquarters of ECWA. While other items such as schooling and housing are important, they have not been given prominence in this report as more time would have been required for more contacts to be made with the public and private sectors. Moreover, these as well as other living conditions are well known to member States and are generally accurately reflected in replies to the questionnaire contained in the Annex to E/ECWA/33.

5. Following the visits to Baghdad and Damascus by the two officials of United Nations mentioned in paragraph 2 above, the secretariat of ECWA received a Note Verbale dated 31 July 1976 from the Syrian Arab Republic conveying amendments to "The Project for the Establishment of the Permanent Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Western Asia in Damascus". These amendments consist mainly of: (a) an alternative offer of a plot of land of 60,000 sq.m. with possible increase to 100,000 sq.m. at another location called "Dimas" instead of the 20,000 sq.m. in the district of "Al-Mezza", and (b) of a loan of 41 million Syrian pounds instead of the 15 million Syrian pounds originally offered. Mention of these amendments is made in relevant parts of this report and the full text of the Note Verbale along with the amendments is attached as an annex to this report.

6. The present report is divided into two chapters (a) site inspection report and (b) financial implications to the United Nations Organization of the offers of Lebanon, Iraq and Syria related to the permanent headquarters of ECWA.

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CHAPTER I  
SITE INSPECTION REPORT

A. BEIRUT, LEBANON<sup>1/</sup>

1. Site: The site proposed in the Baabda area is approximately 50,000 m<sup>2</sup>, 12 acres, and is situated on top of a hill off the main access road across from the presidential palace. The site is generally level, slopes sharply on all sides and affords an excellent view of the city. The surrounding area is residential in character.

2. Natural Factors

Geology: Inspection of the site indicated a soil overlay over sub surface rock. No evaluation could be made of sub soil conditions.

Topography: The proposed area is quite hilly with irregular terrain. Although the site is level it forms a plateau that slopes sharply on all sides to the valley below.

Hydrography: Due to the highly irregular surface of the area there were no water or streams visible on the site.

Soil: The soil is fertile and supports a substantial amount of vegetative matter.

Vegetation: The site is covered with heavy cover of grasses, brush and trees.

3. Existing Land Use

The surrounding area is sparsely developed for general residential use. The presidential palace is adjacent to the site. No visual, auditory or olfactory off site nuisances were observed and no safety hazards appear to exist.

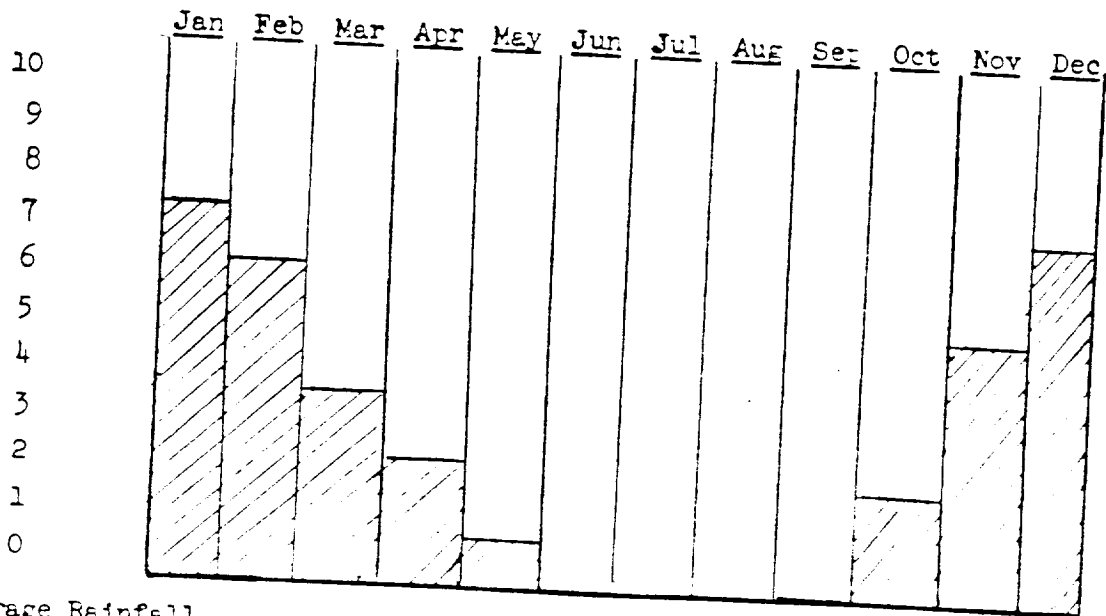
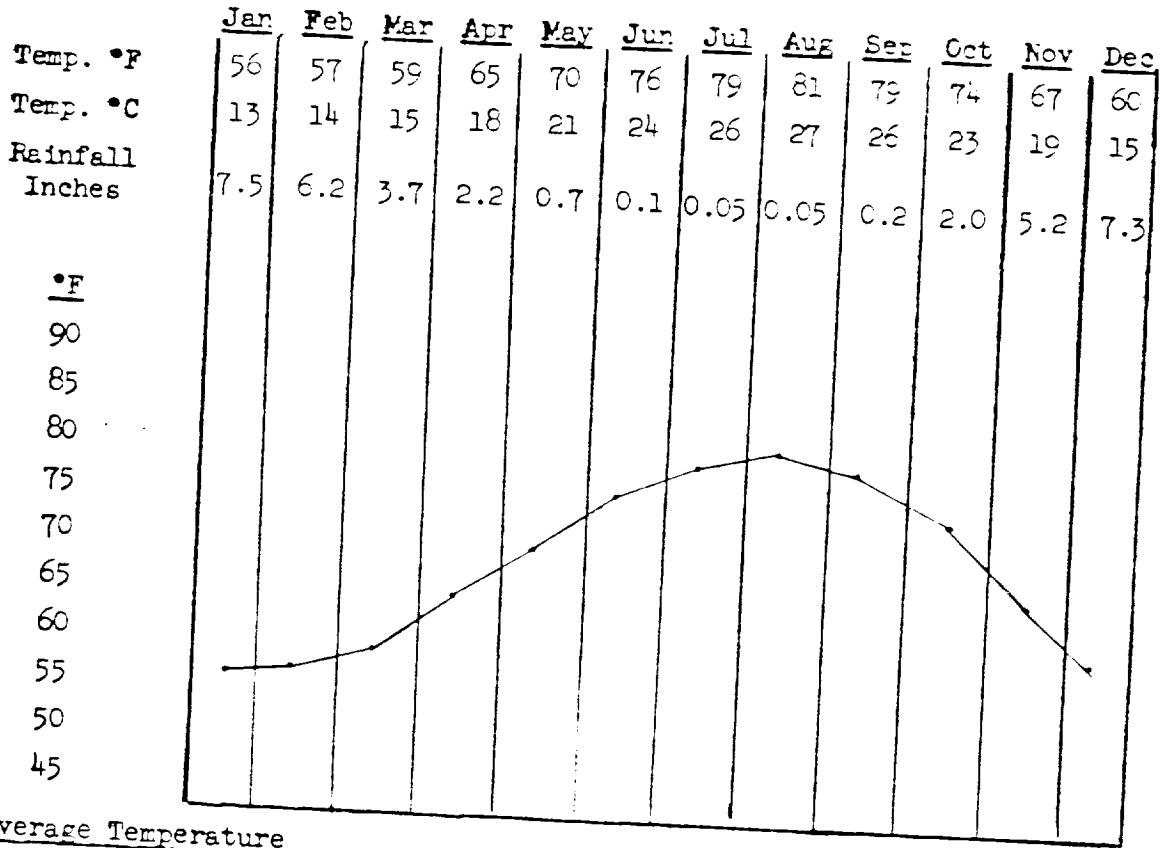
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<sup>1/</sup> The site inspection was conducted in 1974 and commentary is based on conditions that existed at that time.

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Lebanon

Climatic Factors (average climatic conditions)



4. Traffic Transit and Communications

Facilities involving the movement of people, goods, communications or amenities appear adequate.

There are adequate roads in the area to service the proposed complex. Transport is by private vehicle or taxi.

5. Density and Zoning

The area is general residential with a three floor zoning height restriction.

6. Utilities

Adequate water supply is available and electrical feeders of sufficient capacity service the area. Telephone service is also available at the site.

7. Infrastructure

There exists adequate infrastructure to service a facility of the size proposed. It is assumed sewage would have to be handled by an on site facility.

8. Housing

Adequate housing exists in the private sector.

9. Schools

Existing schools are adequate to meet United Nations requirements.

10. Hotels

Existing hotels are adequate to meet commission requirements.

11. Summary

The size of the site combined with the zoning height restrictions would suggest that a horizontal architectural concept would be required to meet the needs of the building programme.

The size of the site may present some problems if future expansion is required.

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B. BAGHDAD, IRAQ

1. Site

The proposed site is 100,000 square meters, or approximately 25 acres, and is located on a modern divided arterial road that connects Baghdad city center to the airport, it lies 3 km from the airport and 14 km from the city center. The site is 250 m wide by 400 m long with its long dimension parallel to a broad green park that acts as a buffer between the site and the road. The property is level as is the terrain in the general area. Two sides are bounded by residential construction and the third side is adjacent to a private club.

2. Natural Factors

Geology: Examination of the soil at the proposed site through observation of existing trenches and excavation in the area indicate the presence of a loose friable soil with apparent absence of sub-surface rock close to the surface. This assumption would have to be verified by test borings taken at several locations on the site.

Topography: The site and the surrounding area for several kilometers in all directions is generally level with no pronounced slope.

Hydrography: Although there are no bodies of water or streams in close proximity to the property, there is a pumped well irrigation canal that parallels the long dimension of the site.

Soil: The soil in the area will support vegetation as evidenced by plant growth in areas serviced by the irrigation canals.

Vegetation: There are many small trees along the irrigation canal while the site is essentially covered with grass.

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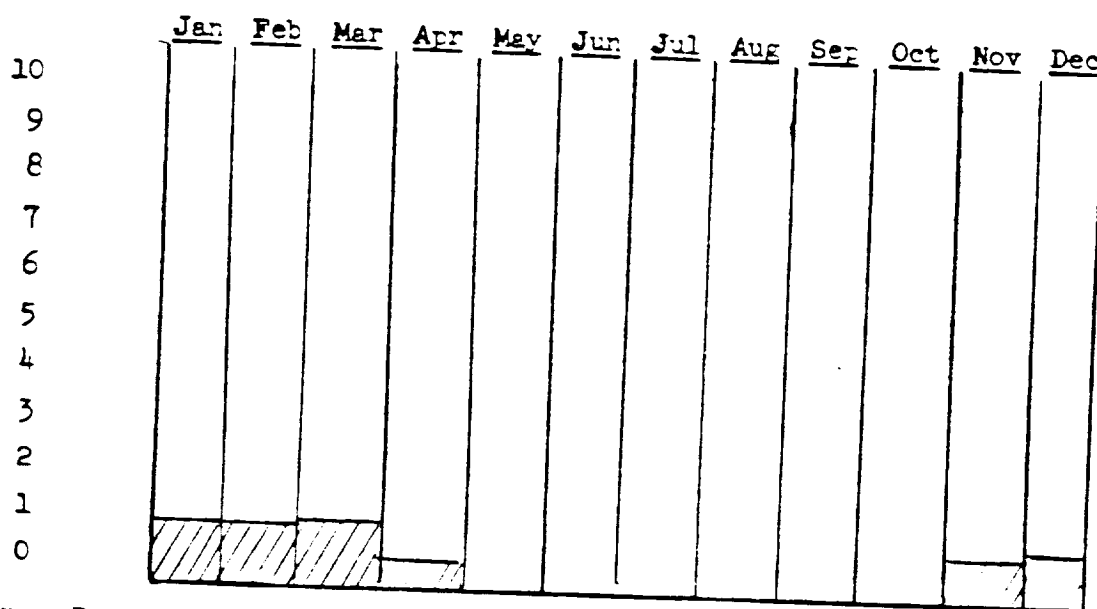
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Climatic Factors (average climatic conditions)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Temp. °F	49	53	59	71	82	89	93	93	87	76	64	53
Temp. °C	10	12	15	21	28	31	34	34	30	24	18	12
Rainfall Inches	1.0	1.0	1.1	0.4	0.1	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.1	0.8	1.0



Average Temperature



Average Rainfall



3. Existing Land Use

The pattern of land use in relation to the site is one of residential construction while there is a recreational club immediately adjacent to the site. The use proposed for this property would be in harmony with other land uses throughout the area. No visual, auditory or olfactory off site nuisances were observed and no safety hazards appeared to exist.

4. Traffic, Transit and Communications

Facilities involving the movement of people, goods, communication or amenities appear adequate. There are adequate roads in the area to service the proposed complex and traffic patterns are well related. A system of public bus transportation services the area.

5. Density and Zoning

The surrounding area is zoned for residential use with a low number of dwellings per land unit.

6. Utilities

Water is available in adequate supply on site. Adequate electrical feeders to service the proposed complex exist near the site. Sufficient telephone service is available in the area.

7. Infrastructure

There exists adequate infrastructure to service a facility of the size proposed with the exception of sewage which would have to be handled by an on site facility.

8. Housing

Although there is a general shortage of housing in the area it is proposed that adjacent to the site approximately 200 units would be provided for United Nations use if desired.

9. Schools

Existing schools are not adequate to meet United Nations staff member requirements. It will be necessary that a school of international calibre be established to service the staff.

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10. Hotels

At the present time existing hotels are inadequate to meet the requirements of ECWA. However, a number of large hotels are currently under construction that should alleviate this condition. Additional hotel facilities are planned for the future.

11. Summary

The nature and size of the site is such that it would permit the construction of a permanent headquarters of ECWA. The amount of land proposed will allow for an adequate development on the site of an appropriate building in keeping with the status of the United Nations as a World Organization. Additionally, the site would appear to be large enough for future expansion should this requirement arise.

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C. DAMASCUS - SYRIA

1. Site

The proposed site is 20,000 sq.m. approximately 5 acres, and it is located on a major arterial road a short distance from Damascus City Center. The site rises sharply from the road to an elevation of approximately three meters and is then generally level. Its longer dimension 167 m parallels the main road while the other dimension is an average of 130 m. On three sides the site is bounded by roads while on the fourth side a government printing facility is currently under construction. A public garden is located immediately adjacent to the property. The surrounding area is generally residential construction presenting a modern appearance.

As mentioned in paragraph 5 on page 2, the Syrian Arab Republic is proposing as an alternative to the Al-Mezza a plot of land of 60,000 sq.m. with possible increase to 100,000 sq.m. in Dinas which is approximately 12 km. from the center of Damascus.

2. Natural Factors

Geology: Examination of the soil at the site through observation of existing excavations indicated the presence of a compacted soil. Inspection of the adjacent site where excavation is underway indicated absence of rock close to the surface. However, this would have to be verified by test borings taken at several locations on the site.

Topography: The site rises sharply from the adjacent arterial road to an elevation approximately three meters above the road surface. It is generally level at this elevation.

Hydrography: There is no evidence of water or streams on the site.

Soil: The soil on the site is compacted and appears to support a low level of vegetative matter.

Vegetation: The site is essentially barren with occasional patches of sparse grass.

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Syria

Climatic Factors (average climatic conditions)

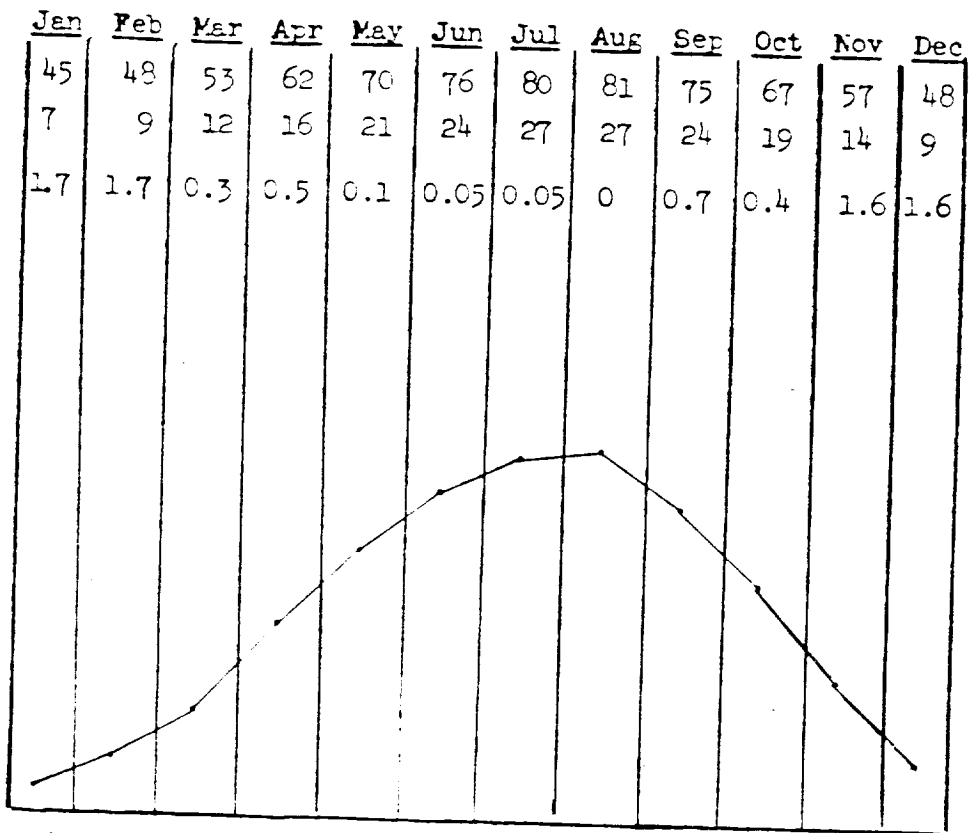
	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>
Temp. °F	45	48	53	62	70	76	80	81	75	67	57	48
Temp. °C	7	9	12	16	21	24	27	27	24	19	14	9
Rainfall Inches	1.7	1.7	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.05	0.05	0	0.7	0.4	1.6	1.6

°F

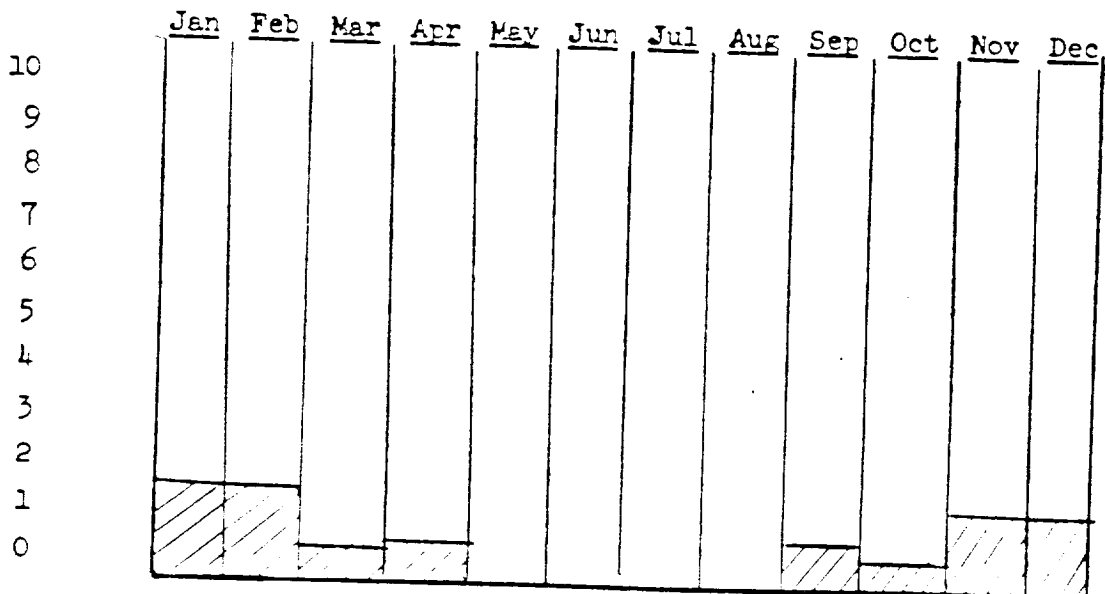
90  
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°C

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16  
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7



Average Temperature



Average Rainfall

3. Existing Land Use

The pattern of land use in relation to the site is essentially residential construction; however, there will be a printing facility on the adjacent property. Nearby are a club, clinic and a post office. The use proposed for the site will harmonize with the other space use in the area.

No visual or olfactory off site nuisances were observed and no safety hazards appear to exist. There is in the general area a military airport utilized by jet aircraft, however, it is understood this facility is to be phased out shortly.

4. Traffic, Transit and Communications

Facilities involving the movement of people, goods, communications or amenities appear adequate. There are adequate roads in the area to service the proposed complex and traffic patterns are well related. Transportation is by private vehicle or taxi.

5. Density and Zoning

The general area is zoned residential with a five floor height restriction. The number of apartments per land unit is moderate.

6. Utilities

Water is available in adequate supply on site. Electrical feeders with sufficient capacity exist to service the property. Telephone service is available in proximity to the site.

7. Infrastructure

There exists adequate infrastructure to service a facility of the size proposed.

8. Housing

Although there is a general shortage of housing it is proposed that approximately 100 units would be provided in the area by the private sector.

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9. Schools

Existing schools are not adequate to meet United Nations staff requirements. It will be necessary to establish a school of international calibre to service the staff.

10. Hotels

Although at the present time the existing hotels are inadequate, there are currently under construction major hotels and additional hotel facilities are planned for the future that should alleviate this condition.

11. Summary

The size of the site of Al-Mezza would suggest that a vertical architectural concept would be required to make provision for the building programme. There is an existing zoning restriction of five floors which will have to be taken into consideration. The size of the site would not permit future additional expansion of the building complex. However, these problems might be eliminated should member States and the United Nations find it advisable to select the "Dimas" site.

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CHAPTER II

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFERS OF LEBANON, IRAQ  
AND SYRIA RELATED TO PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS  
FOR THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

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1. The offers of Lebanon and Syria do not include an architectural plan indicating a development concept or site utilization for the respective projects and under the circumstances it has been necessary to base the cost estimates upon a theoretical development of the site. The estimates therefore are indicative on a presumptive basis of the total cost of a project for the Beirut and Damascus sites. The architectural concept and financial implications proposed by the Government of Iraq were utilized to estimate the cost of its proposal. It is assumed that in all cases exemption will be granted from all taxes and custom duties. The general criteria utilized provides for 7,000 m<sup>2</sup> of below grade parking, a conference building of 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> containing one large and two smaller conference rooms, an office building of 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> with on grade parking for 250 cars with roads, fencing and landscaping.

2. Recent experience with international construction projects has suggested that construction costs are relatively uniform throughout most areas of the world. Low labour costs in an area are counterbalanced by the high cost of importing mechanical equipment and other materials not available locally. This results in a sufficiently broad levelling of construction costs to permit use of similar estimates on a world wide basis for estimating purposes.

3. It should be noted, however, that the financial implications, presently being submitted, are limited to construction costs and do not include estimates of removal costs and operating costs in each location (e.g. post adjustment, local General Service salary costs, utilities, maintenance, communications, etc.)

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Cost of the construction of a Permanent Headquarters  
for ECWA based on estimated universal construction prices<sup>1/</sup>

	<u>US \$</u>
Below grade parking area 7,000 m <sup>2</sup>	\$ 2,500,000
Conference Building area 12,000 m <sup>2</sup>	9,000,000
Office Building area 15,000 m <sup>2</sup>	8,500,000
Roads, fencing and landscaping	1,000,000
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Estimate cost of construction	21,000,000
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Office furniture and miscellaneous furnishings	2,000,000
Conference room furniture and simultaneous interpretation installation	1,000,000
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Architectural and engineering costs 10%	2,500,000
Contingency 10%	2,500,000
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Total	29,000,000

<sup>1/</sup> These base estimates are provided to indicate an order of magnitude rather than real costs which could only be determined on the basis of construction drawings and definitive engineering evaluations.

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ESTIMATED COST OF THE OFFERS  
OF LEBANON, IRAQ AND SYRIA

A. BEIRUT, LEBANON

I	<u>Land</u> - 50,000 m <sup>2</sup> offered by Lebanon (BAABDA site)	No financial implication
II	<u>Housing</u> - Adequate housing to be provided by the private sector	No financial implication
III	<u>Construction</u>	<u>US \$</u>
	Estimated cost of construction <sup>1/</sup>	21,000,000
	Office furniture and miscellaneous furnishings	2,000,000
	Conference room furniture and simultaneous interpretation installation	1,000,000
	Architectural and engineering costs	2,500,000
	Contingency	2,500,000
	Total Estimated Cost	<u>\$ 29,000,000</u>

1/ Based on typical requirements for a permanent  
Headquarters for ECWA.

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Financial contribution of Lebanon, subject  
to approval by the Parliament

\$ 29,000,000

Financial implication of construction to the  
United Nations Organization of the offer of  
Lebanon

Financial  
implication<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> E/ECWA/7 The Lebanese offer consists of a plot of land of 50,000 m<sup>2</sup> and a decision in principle by the Council of Ministers of an interest-free loan to the United Nations for one-half the construction cost of the building. The loan would be repaid to the government of Lebanon in annual installments.

In paragraph 39 of E/5785 is indicated the willingness of the Government of Lebanon to provide all the financial undertakings necessary for the establishment of the Headquarters as well as the readiness of the Lebanese Government to provide everything needed for the permanent Headquarters.

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B. BAGHDAD, IRAQ

(Based on data furnished in E/ECWA/L.5)

I	<u>Land</u> (Site) - 100,000 m <sup>2</sup> offered by Iraq (near airport)	No Financial implication
II	<u>Housing</u> - approximately 200 units of housing to be constructed by Government of Iraq immediately adjacent to the site	No financial implication
III	<u>Construction</u>	<u>US \$</u>
	<u>Estimated Cost of the Project</u> <sup>1/</sup>	
	Estimated cost of the first stage	21,394,913
	Estimated cost of the second stage	5,848,428
	Estimated cost of the third stage	5,182,632
	Plus 15% for supervision and consultation fees and reserve	4,868,979
		<hr/>
		\$ 37,294,952
	Rounded to	\$ 37,500,000
		<hr/>
	Total Estimated Cost	\$ 37,500,000
	Financial contribution of Iraq (approximately 27 million US dollars has already been earmarked for this purpose)	\$ 37,500,000
	Financial implication of construction to the United Nations Organization of the offer of Iraq	No financial implication <sup>2/</sup>

1/ E/ECWA/L.5

2/ E/ECWA/33 Annex I states that the government of the Republic of Iraq is prepared to bear the cost of building the Headquarters of the Commission in Iraq.

C. DAMASCUS, SYRIA

I	<u>Land</u> - 20,000 m <sup>2</sup> offered by Syria (MEZZEH)	No financial implication
II	<u>Housing</u> - approximately 100 units to be provided by the private sector	No financial implication
III	<u>Construction</u>	<u>US \$</u>
	Estimated cost of construction <sup>1/</sup> (including 14,000 m <sup>2</sup> of below grade parking due to restricted site)	23,400,000
	Office furniture and miscellaneous furnishings	2,000,000
	Conference room furniture and simultaneous interpretation installation	1,000,000
	Architectural and engineering costs	2,500,000
	Contingency	2,500,000
	Total Estimated Cost	<u>\$ 31,400,000</u>
	Financial contribution of Syria (Interest free loan of \$10,512.84 for fifteen years)	No Contribution
	Financial implication of construction to the United Nations Organization of the offer of Syria.	\$ 31,400,000

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<sup>1/</sup> Based on typical requirements for a permanent Headquarters for ECWA.

ANNEX

Syrian Arab Republic  
Foreign Ministry  
International Organizations and  
Conferences Session

Ref. T/1211 (8/5/3)  
Date: 31 July 1976

The Foreign Ministry of the Syrian Arab Republic presents its compliments to the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia and has the honour to enclose with this note the amendments relating to the project for the establishment of the Commission's permanent headquarters in Damascus which the Ministry has previously conveyed to the Commission's secretariat with its note T/585 (8/5/3) dated 8 April 1976.

The Ministry wishes to submit these amendments with its above-mentioned original project to the Commission at its forthcoming meeting in Doha on 21 August 1976.

The Ministry takes this opportunity to express its deepest esteem and regard for the secretariat of the Commission.

Enclosures: 30 copies of the amendments.

The Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia

Amman

Amendments to the Project for the Establishment of the Permanent  
Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Western  
Asia in Damascus

A. Office Premises

1. The first five lines of paragraph (2) of the first page of the project should be deleted to read as follows:
  - "2. The Syrian Arab Government has allocated a plot of land of twenty thousand square metres valued at 26 million Syrian Pounds in the new district of Damascus (Al-Mezza) and decided to donate this plot to the Commission for the construction of its headquarters building in accordance with the specifications and terms which it deems appropriate. It has also decided to extend an interest-free loan of 41 million Syrian Pounds to be reimbursed in annual instalments to be agreed upon. This loan is sufficient to cover the cost of constructing, furnishing and equipping the building."

The rest of paragraph (2) remains as it is without amendment.

2. On page 2 and after paragraph (3) a new paragraph (4) should be inserted to read as follows:
  - "4. There is also a possibility of allocating another site for the headquarters of the Commission in Damascus as an alternative to the first site in Al-Mezza. The Commission may select either of the two sites. The site referred to is in the "Dinas" district where it is possible to donate a plot of land of sixty thousand square metres, extendable to 100,000 sq.m., in addition to the loan (41 million Syrian Pounds) mentioned in paragraph (2) above.