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

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
I. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS	3
A. Programme planning and co-ordination within the ECWA secretariat.....	3
B. The Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific.....	5
C. Programme of work and priorities 1986-1987.....	6
1. Food and agriculture.....	7
2. Development issues and policies.....	11
3. Energy.....	13
4. Environment.....	15
5. Human settlement.....	17
6. Industrial development.....	20
7. Trade and development finance.....	22
8. Natural resources.....	24
9. Population.....	26
10. Public administration and finance.....	29
11. Science and technology.....	31
12. Social development.....	33
13. Statistics.....	36
14. Transport and communications.....	38
15. Transnational corporations.....	40
16. Technical co-operation.....	41
D. Discussion of the items of the provisional agenda for the ECWA twelfth session.....	44
1. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission: progress made in the implementation of the work programme (agenda item 7(a)).....	44
2. Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission (agenda item 7(b)).....	54

CONTENTS (Cont'd)

	<u>Page</u>
3. Follow-up action at the regional level of the United Nations world conferences and ECWA regional meetings (agenda item 8).....	58
4. Financial status of the Commission's programme (agenda item 9).....	58
5. Role of the joint ventures in promoting economic co-operation and integration in Western Asia (agenda item 10).....	59
6. Co-operation among developing countries (agenda item 11).....	60
7. Other business.(agenda item 9).....	61
8. Adoption of the Technical Committee's report (agenda item 10).....	61
II. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE THIRD SESSION.....	62
A. Place and date of session.....	62
B. Attendance.....	62
C. Credentials.....	63
D. Election of officers.....	63
E. Adoption of the agenda.....	63
F. Organization of work.....	64

ANNEXES

I. Resolutions adopted by the Technical Committee at its third session.....	65
II. List of documents submitted to the Technical Committee at its third session.....	69

INTRODUCTION

1. The third session of the Technical Committee was opened by Mr. Ismail Al-Dulaymi, Chairman of the second session of the Standing Committee for the Programme, on Saturday, 20 April 1985, in a statement in which he welcomed those present and expressed the hope that the Committee would be able to complete the tasks entrusted to it in the allotted time. In particular, he called attention to the item regarding the follow-up of Standing Committee resolutions with the aim of finding the best way to expedite future activity of the Committee. He did so in order to draw up a realistic programme which would meet the actual needs of the region and reflect the past and potential achievements of ECWA.
2. Mr. Mohamed Said Al-Attar, Executive Secretary of the Commission, made a statement in which he welcomed the convening of the third session of the Technical Committee, formerly designated the Standing Committee for the Programme. He pointed out that the new nomenclature was in keeping with the additional powers entrusted to the Commission's programme committee, the discussion of the items on the agenda of the annual session in preparation for the Commission's meeting at the ministerial level having been added to its functions. At the same time, he stressed the importance of the role played by the Technical Committee and the increasing magnitude of its responsibilities. The latter were guided by United Nations resolutions and the needs of member States in determining programme priorities and strategies.
3. He also emphasized the need for a close scrutiny of ECWA programme activities and for their scheduling in such a manner as to be in keeping with the corresponding activities of other regional and international organizations as well as with human and financial resources. The availability of the latter would be determined by the recent contraction in the resources of the United Nations system. The situation presented a new challenge to the Commission which, while aspiring to maintain and even raise the level of its productivity, remained committed to rationalizing its needs without infringing on its commitments to member States.
4. The Executive Secretary briefly introduced the topics for discussion, calling attention in particular to agenda item 6 (a) on programme planning and co-ordination. The process of instilling the basic principles of sound and well-considered planning was the corner-stone for the formulation of a coherent and comprehensive programme, just as the programme evaluation system, which came into being at the beginning of 1983 and which

continued to acquire additional momentum in the light of the adjustments made to it, represented a tool for ensuring that the programme followed the proper course. Turning to agenda item 6(b), on the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific (1985-1994), he invited the Committee to consider taking appropriate measures relating to the Commission's role in the Decade and the obligations entailed thereby.

5. He referred to agenda item 7, reviewing the programme of work and priorities for 1986-1987. He invited the Committee to study the programme content set out in document E/ECWA/XII/CP/6 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, stressing that the programme had been carefully formulated in order to ensure a high level of implementation.

6. With regard to the items on the agenda of the ministerial meeting of the ECWA session, he stressed the importance of item 7, reviewing the progress made in the implementation of the work programme for the current biennium. At the same time, the increase in the vacancy rate for substantive posts at ECWA, particularly at the level of Chiefs of Divisions, continued to present a basic obstacle to the implementation of the programme in the manner required. He called for programme performance to be understood in that perspective and stated that the situation had prompted the Commission to cancel, amalgamate or defer a number of those programme elements approved for the current biennium.

7. He drew attention to the role of joint ventures in strengthening economic co-operation and integration in the ECWA region, which would be discussed under item 10 of the agenda of the ministerial meeting, in view of the widening scope and increasing scale of joint ventures undertaken by developing countries. He called for in-depth discussion of the topic with a view to promoting joint regional projects and directing them into the proper course in the context of economic development and overall regional co-operation in Western Asia.

I. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

A. Programme planning and co-ordination within the ECWA secretariat

Agenda item 6(a) (E/ECWA/XII/CP/4 and Corr.1)

8. The Committee began its deliberations with a discussion of the item. The Chief of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit within the ECWA secretariat presented a brief review of document E/ECWA/XII/CP/4, indicating that ECWA had identified some basic aspects of the programme planning process. As regards programme priorities, the secretariat had cut 10 programme elements from the number planned for the 1984-1985 biennium. A number of activities had been reformulated and resources reallocated. Seventeen per cent of programme elements had been affected, some having been expanded and some reduced in scope. The Committee had before it a proposal for the termination of 10 other programme elements, constituting 11.5 per cent of the total number. The overall percentage of programme elements proposed for cancellation was therefore 23 per cent of the total. It was proposed to defer another 8 per cent to the next biennium, mainly as a result of the vacancy situation in Professional posts which amounted to 36 per cent of the total number of Professional posts in 1984.

9. The lessons derived from the 1984-1985 biennium exercise with regard to the need to concentrate both resources and programmes had been drawn upon in the preparation of the programme and priorities for 1986-1987. The total number of planned programme elements has been reduced to 70 as against 86 in the previous programme.

10. In 1984, 16 programme elements out of the 59 under implementation were being carried out either jointly or in consultation with regional organizations. In addition five ad hoc activities which were not programmed for in the 1984-1985 budget were being carried out and seven activities had been completed in the same year in co-operation with the League of Arab States.

11. With regard to evaluation, he noted that the secretariat had established a schedule for the evaluation of four programmes during 1984-1985. These were new and renewable sources of energy, capital goods, food security, and science and technology. However, he noted that the evaluation exercise had not been as successful as had been hoped in view of the inadequacy of the responses received to questionnaires sent by the secretariat to member countries.

12. Four subject-specific intergovernmental meetings on industry, food security, statistics and renewable energy scheduled for 1986-1987 would provide an opportunity to undertake an evaluation of the achievements made and to determine the course of future ECWA activities in those fields.

13. The representative of Iraq noted that the question of post vacancies would hamper the proper implementation of ECWA programmes and had led to a curtailment of those programmes in the past. Since the resolution on filling vacancies had been adopted, ECWA should complete and fully implement its programmes for the benefit of the member States. With regard to co-ordination and co-operation with the regional organizations and international organizations operating in the region, he expressed appreciation for ECWA co-ordination endeavours. He also expressed the hope that ECWA would broaden the scope of its co-ordination efforts to encompass new fields and issues. In addition he stressed the importance of evaluation in providing indicators that would help in coping with and avoiding shortcomings in the planning process. He pointed out that evaluation should not be confined to sending questionnaires. In that respect he stressed the importance of direct contact as a more effective means of evaluation.

14. The representative of Saudi Arabia supported the views expressed by the Iraqi representative concerning the evaluation process and stressed its importance in providing indicators of efficiency, quality and shortcomings. He called for questionnaires to be sent to the bodies concerned with co-ordination, and to technical departments, which would act as liaison points, instead of sending the questionnaires directly to ministries. Such an approach would facilitate follow-up.

15. The representative of Egypt proposed that the vacancies should be filled by nationals of the region, which had a rich store of varied expertise. That was in keeping with United Nations policy which specified that 75 per cent of the posts in the regional commissions should be occupied by nationals of the regions concerned. He drew attention to the need for complementarity between the countries with a wealth of expertise and those which lacked it, so that the question of quotas would not remain an obstacle to the derival of benefit from the expertise available in the region.

16. The Chairman of the Committee stressed that countries with limited representation should be given priority in filling those vacancies. If they did not have adequate numbers of experts, the vacancies should be filled by nationals of member States with a surplus of expertise.

B. The Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific

Agenda item 6(b)
(E/ECWA/XII/CP/5 and Add.1)

17. The officer-in-charge of the Transport and Communications Division at ECWA reviewed the various aspects of that Decade that had been proclaimed by the General Assembly on 18 December 1984 and in which the Secretary General was requested to extend support to the Executive Secretaries of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Western Asia. He said that ECWA participation in the activities of the Decade aimed at the achievement of the maximum degree of intraregional and interregional co-operation. The member States of ECWA would be able to avail themselves of the opportunity offered by the Decade to improve their transport and communication links with other regions, thereby accelerating and enhancing their economic and social progress. He said that the Decade was divided into three stages: a preparatory stage lasting two years (1985-1986), an implementation stage lasting three years (1987-1989) and a third stage lasting five years (1990-1994) which was the stage of continued implementation, monitoring, follow-up, review and revision and amendment. He emphasized the need to conduct an effective campaign for the mobilization of resources in order to obtain the funds needed to cover the costs of the programme of action. He indicated that the requisite financing could be obtained from member countries as well as from ECWA regional organizations, Arab funds, donor countries, international agencies and financial institutions that were prepared to provide the necessary aid.

18. The representative of Iraq made a number of comments on that subject. He recommended that the member countries should formulate a national programme of action for the Transport and Communications Decade and that they should prepare regional strategies. He said that working groups, comprising representatives from the countries of the region, should participate in order to enhance planning capabilities in co-ordination with member countries which had an interest in the completion of the international road and railway network links with Iraq and neighbouring Arab countries. He pointed out that Iraq was the principal strategic point of transit for the establishment of any railway network from southern Europe to Western Asia, as well as for the international highways which, in spite of the current wartime conditions, were still under construction. He emphasized that a start on the implementation of the Transport and Communications Decade should be made within the ECWA region as a first step, after which consideration could be given to the expansion of the transport and communications

network with a view to integrating it with other regions in Asia and Africa. He drew attention to the fact that the rapid implementation of the Decade over the coming years would be of economic and strategic benefit to all the ECWA countries.

19. The representative of Egypt inquired about co-operation with the body that was supervising the construction of the road from Cairo to Gaborone (Botswana), a body established by the Economic Commission for Africa which had recently held several meetings. He inquired whether co-operation would include assigning a representative of ECWA to attend meetings of that body.

C. Programme of work and priorities
1986-1987

Agenda item (7)
(E/ECWA/XII/CP/6, Add.1
and Add.1/Corr.1)

20. The Chief of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit within the ECWA secretariat made a short presentation on the item and stated that the programme had been drawn up in the light of a number of considerations: first, the Medium-Term Plan for the five-year period 1984-1989; secondly, the priorities established by member States and the recommendations made by the Standing Committee for the Programme; thirdly, the norms and provisions governing programme planning established by the General Assembly concerning the periodic review of the programme in order to identify and cancel those programme elements which had become obsolete or of marginal usefulness and to redistribute resources in accordance with new data; and fourthly, the instructions of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on programme formulation, chiefly the observance of the greatest possible discipline and moderation in determining resources needed.

21. The Chief of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit within the ECWA secretariat said that the secretariat had made the greatest possible effort, in the light of the above-mentioned considerations, so that its programme should be coherent and complete and so that programme content should be in keeping with the resources and possibilities available. He asserted that the reduction in programme elements had not led to a reduction in programme content and had not restricted its scope. Rather, concentration had been focused on specific activities in the practical and pragmatic fields with a view to responding to the specific needs of member States and so that the programme elements in question might provide the possibility of establishing joint ventures with certain other regional and international organizations.

22. He said that the new programme of work and priorities would contribute directly to development efforts and that such activities required continued consultation and intensive interaction with the States concerned. He called the attention of representatives to the activities included under a number of programme elements covering "selected countries" of the region without identifying those countries, noting that the secretariat wished to ascertain the interest of States in such programme elements. He invited representatives to study the content of those elements thoroughly and frankly with a view to selecting those they considered might be suitable for the participation of their countries.

23. The Chairman of the Committee invited the chiefs of the Commission's substantive divisions to introduce the topics contained in the programme of work and priorities (document E/ECWA/XII/6/Add.1), in the order in which they appeared in that document as a preliminary to the debate on the item.

1. Food and agriculture

24. The officer-in-charge of the Joint ECWA/FAO Food and Agriculture Division said that that Division had, since beginning its work in 1974, continued to implement a wide-ranging programme in a number of major fields, including: a review of agricultural trends and developments in the region; assistance in agricultural planning; food security; the preservation of agricultural resources; efforts to combat desertification; and rural development. He noted that the Division's work programme for the biennium 1986-1987 had come to be concentrated in three subprogrammes: monitoring and management of agricultural development and agricultural resources; planning and public policy in the food area; and support to the agrarian reform and rural development programmes. He called attention to the Division's annual bulletin Agriculture and Development in Western Asia which had become a forum for the exchange of information and views among countries of the region on the most salient developments and trends and the problems they encountered in the field of agriculture. He referred to the Division's co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme in the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, stating that its attention over the coming biennium would concentrate on specific national projects to combat desertification. The Division would also accord greater attention to the practical training of national planners in the planning and analysis of agricultural projects, including the use of computers. Referring to food security, he noted that the Division was concentrating on the establishment of national arrangements for food security, including crop forecasting, the

establishment of national reserves of food, particularly cereals, the establishment of a new food information system, and an early warning system for field crops. He noted the Division's decision to concentrate on a number of practical country studies in the field of agrarian reform, rural development and the alleviation of rural poverty.

25. The representative of Qatar referred to the problem of the vague and generalized nature of the information provided under the food and agriculture item and called for a clearer definition of the content of the programmes, the magnitude of the resources needed for their implementation and the countries that would benefit therefrom in order to facilitate participation by all representatives in the discussion of those programmes. In his view, the mere issuance of reports, bulletins and memoranda was insufficient to solve the problems in question. He called for greater clarity and a more specific definition of programmes and expressed the hope that the forthcoming period would see an improvement in the quality of the work carried out by ECWA for the benefit of member States. He called upon ECWA to co-operate and co-ordinate with the regional organizations concerned.

26. The representative of Yemen supported the observations made by the representative of Qatar concerning the vague manner in which the programmes and projects had been submitted under that item. He also inquired about the specific preparations that had been made to deal with "periodic fluctuations and unforeseeable emergencies" to which reference had been made in the context of the programme.

27. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization made two preliminary comments on the programme of work. First, he emphasized the need for all the programmes to focus on support for the struggle by the steadfast population in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Secondly, he requested that all data and studies compiled by ECWA should include the occupied territories. He then requested that a number of the training opportunities provided for under the programme should be allocated to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

28. The representative of Saudi Arabia endorsed the views expressed by the representative of Qatar and emphasized that vagueness in the identification of problems merely made them more complex. He called for a reformulation of all the items so that the meetings of the Technical Committee could serve a greater purpose and so that the member States could be made aware of the extent of the achievements and the methods of dealing with problems. He urged ECWA to tackle problems in conjunction with regional organizations and not to resort to obscurantism.

29. The representative of Iraq described the agricultural and development programmes as over-generalized and, as such, inconsistent with the practical and applied ECWA methodology to which reference had previously been made by the representative of the secretariat. He drew attention to the studies and the constructive endeavours that had been made in the field of food security by the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development and to the projects that had been outlined in the Arab Investment Agreement and transmitted to local financing bodies in the various countries. He called upon ECWA to co-ordinate its activities with those endeavours on the basis of those examples that had already been set. He drew attention to the importance of the subject of food industries in the region in the light of the increasing volume of foodstuffs that were being imported into the region. He stressed the need for a closer interrelationship and harmonization between ECWA programmes and the development plans of member countries in order to achieve complementarity and an intensification of country endeavours in that respect.
30. The representative of Jordan called for an identification of the countries on which ECWA was carrying out studies. He indicated that Jordan was currently formulating a five-year agricultural development plan (1985-1990) and called for co-ordination between his country and ECWA in that respect.
31. The Chairman of the Committee pointed out that the question of food and agriculture was far more extensive than any of the endeavours that were being undertaken by ECWA and all the specialized United Nations organizations. He expressed the view that the work should focus on aspects that could serve as models to be followed by other countries in the region. He said that ECWA programme elements should be co-ordinated with the plans of member States during the coming biennium 1986-1987 so that ECWA could contribute in one way or another to the search for solutions to the problems facing member States in the sphere of food security.
32. The representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia said that the international organizations should monitor the progress and achievements of member States and not confine themselves to merely offering advice. He said that his country's concept of co-ordination comprised various possibilities such as the exchange of information and the determination of the optimum locations for the establishment of projects etc., so that co-ordination could play a functional role.
33. The representative of Jordan proposed that liaison officers should be appointed to supervise co-ordination between their Governments and ECWA.

34. In reply to the comments made by the representatives, the officer-in-charge of the Joint ECWA/FAO Food and Agriculture Division said that, in view of the broad scope of the activities in question, the Division was doing its utmost within the limits of the resources available to it and in co-ordination with a large number of organizations operating in that vital field at the national, regional and international levels and was diligently playing its role as a connecting link or catalyst between the various activities that were being undertaken in that field. Consequently, it was endeavouring to collect and publish information in order to assist regional and international organizations and, in particular, FAO in their field projects that were being implemented in the region. He indicated that the Division was planning to organize a joint intergovernmental meeting in 1986 in order to discuss priority projects in the field of food security. The secretariat believed that such a meeting would provide an opportunity for member States to adopt practical and tangible measures aimed at the establishment of regional projects for the enhancement of food security. Other practical proposals that had been formulated by the Division included the two studies that had recently been completed on post-harvest wheat losses in Iraq and post-harvest wheat and rice losses in Egypt. The outcome of those two studies could be utilized for the adoption of effective measures to prevent such shortfalls in the principal crops of the region. He also referred to the Division's activities in regard to the establishment of an early warning system in the production of strategic agricultural crops in the ECWA region, a system based on technical collaboration with FAO and subsidiary organs of the League of Arab States. The Division was also co-operating closely with the above-mentioned bodies in connection with methods and programmes for the provision of training in the planning and analysis of agricultural projects. That activity included the use of computer methods at FAO in order to train experts from the region in the techniques of analysing agricultural projects. He said that ECWA had received requests in that respect from Democratic Yemen and Jordan and would be sending a mission to Jordan during the coming month of October. In regard to the efforts made to combat desertification, the magnitude of which obviously exceeded the capabilities and resources of the Division, he pointed out that ECWA was co-operating with UNEP which, for its part, was preparing a technical manual on the analysis of projects to combat desertification which would be made available to the national experts concerned. With regard to the observation made by the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization, he said that the Division had recently issued, in collaboration with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, a study on food security in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, together with a number of important recommendations in that connection.

35. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECWA expressed appreciation for the comments and observations that had been made and which indicated the extent of the concern shown for the development of ECWA activities. He referred to the importance of the question of food and agriculture in the light of the tremendous gap between production and consumption, the political pressures that were expected to be brought to bear on the countries of the region as a whole, and the balance of payment deficits with which those countries were faced. Consequently, the dimensions of the problem far exceeded the endeavours that could be made by a single division or unit. Regional and international organizations funds and bodies were still attempting to circumscribe that far-reaching problem. He explained that the competent division at ECWA included two groups of experts from the FAO and ECWA staff and that the extent of the achievements that could be expected of them should be viewed in relation to their small number. He called upon the member States to help ECWA in the preparation of programmes with a view to ensuring the practical nature of such programmes. He stressed that ECWA had done its utmost to ensure co-ordination in all fields, in keeping with its deep conviction concerning the importance of co-ordination with all the parties concerned. He pointed out that all ECWA activities also constituted matters of concern to other international and regional specialized organizations. He said that ECWA was playing its role within the limits of its budget and technical and human capabilities and was therefore submitting its programme of work to the experts and representatives in order to obtain their views concerning modifications, improvements or extensions to the items concerned.

2. Development issues and policies

36. The officer-in-charge of the Development Planning Division gave an outline of his Division's work programme in that field. He discussed the overall objective of the programme to assist in designing development strategies, identifying priorities and providing guidelines for policy action at the national and regional levels towards the achievement of integrated economic and social development. He indicated that the programme had given particular attention to the least developed countries in the region. He reviewed the Division's endeavours to formulate country macro-econometric models for medium and long-term projections and a meeting to evaluate all that planning at the national level and the preparation of a subregional model in 1987. With regard to the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries, he pointed out that ECWA, as the focal point at the regional level, had made contributions to the international meetings due to be held in the autumn of 1985 to review the achievements made during the first half of the decade. In that respect, ECWA was working in close

co-operation with UNCTAD and with the regional funds and organizations concerned with development in the region. He referred to the bulletins that the Division would be issuing during the biennium, particularly the "Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ECWA Region" and the in-depth "Studies on Development Problems in Countries of Western Asia". He added that substantive services would also be provided for the meeting of eminent persons on development prospects for the ECWA region during the next decade.

37. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization said that the PLO was attaching considerable importance to development policies in the occupied territories in which it had made tremendous efforts to strengthen the local economies. However, those efforts were being impeded by Israeli economic policies that were seeking to integrate the economies of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in order to use them as a tool for the benefit of the Israeli economy. Furthermore, since the efforts that had been made had not been backed up by proper development policies, they had been unable to achieve their objectives. He said that the PLO hoped that the programme under review would take into account the special situation of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and define the nature of the development policies that could be implemented in that respect in order to enable those economies not only to develop but also to withstand the challenge posed by the Israeli economy in such a way as to prevent the economic isolation of the occupied territories from the rest of the Arab world.

38. The representative of Saudi Arabia referred to the vague manner in which that sector of ECWA activities had been presented. He stressed the need for co-ordination with the Economic Council of the League of Arab States and Arab economic and development institutions, including the development funds. He questioned the advisability of assigning priority to co-operation with UNCTAD rather than seeking first of all to strengthen co-operation with Arab regional organizations.

39. The representative of Iraq referred to an inconsistency between the objective and the elements of the programme. The objective was to establish appropriate development strategies with a view to stimulating collective international action and enhancing the capabilities of Governments in planning methods, modelling, projections and other fields, whereas the end results consisted in technical bulletins. With regard to perspective planning, he pointed out that planning capabilities differed in various parts of the world and, consequently, ready-made models should not be transferred from highly developed regions to regions that were still in the early stages of economic management, scientific research and industrial development. He

called for an evaluation of the results of the four econometric models and proposed that the views of the countries of the region on those models, and also on the possibility of their practical application and comprehension by national cadres, should be sought before any new measures were adopted in that connection. The planning specialist in the Iraqi delegation drew attention to the importance of a region-wide study of planning models in view of the general similarity between the Arab economies. He emphasized the need to evaluate the models that had been prepared and to ascertain the views of the States for which they had been prepared. He drew attention to the importance of co-ordination with the specialized Planning Committee in the Council of Arab Economic Unity in regard to the formulation of models and expressed the hope that the Survey of Economic and Social Developments would transcend the compilation of numerical indicators to include analytical data. He called upon ECWA to submit preliminary numerical concepts to the forthcoming meeting of eminent persons so that those concepts could be applied in the field.

40. The representative of Egypt expressed support for the request made by the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization that efforts should be made to strengthen economic steadfastness in the occupied territories since the time factor was not working in favour of the population of those territories. Their economy should be Arab-oriented in order to prevent it from being turned into a mere tool for the furtherance of the Israeli economy.

41. The officer-in-charge of the Development Planning Division promised to expand the scope of ECWA activities to include the occupied territories. He agreed that there was a need for further strengthening co-operation with regional organizations and funds and the Development Planning Division was deeply involved in achieving that objective. He said that the Division was striving to develop the simplest econometric models appropriate to the circumstances of the region and called upon the member countries to help the secretariat to obtain the data needed for an evaluation of the models in the light of the economic characteristics of the petroleum-producing, the non-petroleum and least developed countries of the region. He reiterated that the planned meeting in 1987 was specifically designed to evaluate the country models and the subregional model. He confirmed that there was constant co-ordination with the activities of the Council of Arab Economic Unity and the Economic Department at the League of Arab States.

3. Energy

42. The Officer-in-charge of the Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division introduced the energy programme and referred

to the endeavours made by ECWA to establish a regional network on new and renewable sources of energy (NRSE) with a view to exchanging information and expertise. He also referred to the ECWA projects to promote the application of mature solar and wind energy technologies, to develop methods for the conservation of energy in the regional housing sector, and to prepare a technical study on the generation of energy from urban and rural waste in two selected countries of the ECWA region. Referring to the network activities on (NRSE) he mentioned the co-operation that was taking place in that respect between the secretariat and the bodies concerned in the region, including the Scientific Documentation Centre in Iraq, the Public Authority for New and Renewable Energy in Egypt and the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan.

43. The representative of Egypt commended the co-ordination with the bodies concerned in the field of energy and referred to the use of computers for the purpose of liaison between research and information centres as was happening, for example, in the case of the Non-Aligned Movement which had established a co-operation and liaison centre in India. He pointed out that the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology in Egypt was linked to that centre and to other centres in all sectors to which it was transmitting and from which it was receiving data. He requested that Egypt should be one of the two countries selected for the project involving the generation of energy from waste in view of the considerable advances that it had made in that field.

44. The representative of Iraq proposed that additional studies should be conducted in that respect, including forecasts of the growth in energy consumption over the next 20 years and forecasts of the availability of sources of energy throughout the world and particularly in the developing countries. He expressed the hope that the information network would include all sources of energy and that Iraq would be among the countries covered by the study on energy conservation in the housing sector.

45. The representative of Saudi Arabia drew attention to the need for precise terminology when discussing energy planning since it should be specified whether such planning referred to the storage, distribution or marketing of energy.

46. The representative of Qatar referred to the importance of promoting the generation of energy from all traditional and non-traditional sources in the case of all countries.

47. The representative of the secretariat replied that the information network was designed to establish a data base for co-ordination with the institutions concerned. He welcomed the proposal that Egypt should be one of the two countries covered by

the study on the generation of energy from waste, as well as Iraq's interest in energy conservation in the housing sector and the possibility of benefiting from Iraq's expertise in that field. With regard to co-ordination, with other regional organizations he said that ECWA would be contributing three papers to the third Arab Energy Conference (Algeria, 4-9 May 1985).

4. Environment

48. The Chief of the Environment Co-ordination Unit at ECWA referred to the secretariat's activities in that respect, including the establishment of priorities in regard to environmental problems, the provision of advice for member countries and the proposal of appropriate means for environmental management and the exchange of information. He indicated that ECWA was working in conjunction with the international and regional organizations concerned, including UNEP, WHO and the Marine Environment Protection Programme in Kuwait, with a view to enhancing national and regional capabilities in the field of environmental management and formulating a comprehensive view of the future of the environment at the national and regional levels. Consequently, ECWA would be helping in the preparation of regional conferences, such as the Workshop on Solid Waste Management in Urban Communities, and participating in related international meetings such as the International Symposium on Industrial and Hazardous Wastes. He referred to the co-operation between the Unit and the ECWA programme in regard to the environmental aspect of projects and the arrangements for the establishment of a Network for the Exchange of Environmental Information in Connection with Administrative Machinery, Legislative Instruments, Monitoring Schemes, Environmental Impact Assessment and Use of Low and Non-Waste Technology.

49. The representative of Qatar called attention to the importance of the subject for the States of the region and for the world, particularly in the light of the dangers of industrial waste arising from industrial development in many countries. He noted that ECWA had not given the environment programme the necessary attention. Rather than according it priority and financing the environment programme with the required allocation from its own budget, ECWA sought extrabudgetary resources for the programme. That in itself would show that the latter was of secondary importance. The representative of Qatar then embarked on a detailed survey of the state of industrial installations in his country, including the following ones: those at Umm Sa'id on the eastern coast where the iron and chemical industries and the water desalination plants were located; those belonging to the complex of light industries outside the capital, Doha; and those of the cement works on the western coast. He pointed out that

waste from those industrial zones, which had been established far from the large residential centres, was treated in order to produce water fit for agricultural irrigation. Companies incinerated their industrial waste in areas far from the towns. He affirmed that his country's interest in environmental matters was reflected in the fact that in 1981 it had established a Standing Committee for Environmental Protection which enjoyed wide statutory and legal powers. He called upon ECWA to give high priority to environmental matters in its work programme.

50. The representative of Egypt called attention to the need to take account of local conditions and of the environmental factors prevailing in the region rather than to strive to emulate the standards achieved in highly developed countries outside the region. The newly-established industries of the region should not have to bear increased burdens which might hinder their growth. He said that the legislation that needed to be promulgated in the environmental field should provide for incentives rather than penalties, particularly as regards the private sector, so that the disposal of refuse and the treatment of industrial and other forms of waste could become a useful and profitable process. He indicated that his country's interest in environmental matters had given rise to the establishment of an independent environmental agency which reported to the Office of the Prime Minister. The Egyptian General Organization for Industrialization was constantly installing anti-pollution equipment at industrial sites. So far, 15 such plants had been installed.

51. The representative of Iraq referred to his country's interest in pollution control. He said that the relevant text in the programme of work and priorities was less detailed and informative than the statement with which it was introduced by the Chief of the ECWA Environment Co-ordination Unit and which referred to the organization of study groups and joint ventures etc. He called for greater complementarity between national and regional concerns in the environmental field with a view to co-ordinating the secretariat's programme elements with the national programmes that were being implemented.

52. The representative of Saudi Arabia confirmed the existence of bodies that were already active in the field of pollution control. He called upon ECWA to co-ordinate and collaborate with those bodies. He also stressed the need to publicize those region-wide endeavours that were being made by existing public institutions.

53. The representative of Jordan stressed the importance of co-ordination with regional environmental organizations.

54. The representative of Iraq called for a detailed explanation regarding the significance of the activities, meetings or sessions which the secretariat representative had said the Commission would participate in. He asked for further details in view of the expenses entailed in the light of the United Nations zero growth policy.

55. The Chief of the Environment Co-ordination Unit stressed that ECWA was keen on monitoring, reviewing and underscoring the efforts exerted in the field of the environment at the regional level. He said the Unit was preparing a study on the subject of industrial pollution and related problems and would present it to ECWA. The study would provide a detailed review of the dimensions of the problems and the control measures adopted by every member State. It would also cover means of environmental management in every member country for pollution control and would draw up a proposed practical programme in that regard. He agreed with the representative of Egypt on the necessity of concentrating on appropriate technology and on promoting the incentive rather than the punitive aspect of environmental legislations and policies.

5. Human settlement

56. The Chief of the ECWA Human Settlements Division reviewed the four subprogrammes that made up the human settlements programme. The first concerned the integration of physical planning with economic and social planning and the goal was the preparation of human settlements country profiles. The country profiles had been begun by ECWA in the biennium 1984-1985 and it was intended to extend coverage to the remaining countries of the region in the coming biennium. From the information available it was possible to evaluate the methods used in human settlements planning and to propose suitable solutions for each case. Subprogramme 2, City management, dealt with the problems arising from the rapid and uncontrolled growth of urban conglomerations and their lack of basic services such as drinking water supply, sanitary drainage, communications, education, housing, and health services. It also dealt with issues of environmental management to contrast the continuing increase in environmental pollution as a result of industrial development and growing urbanization. The programme would conduct case-studies of four cities, namely Alexandria, Amman, Manama and Sana'a. With regard to subprogramme 3, Building materials, the representative of the Division stated that the importance of the matter was not restricted to the creation of jobs for skilled and unskilled workers. The objective of the element was to assess the building materials and construction industries by establishing pioneer model projects for the purpose of developing the production of building materials from local raw materials, which projects were

intended to use traditional sources of energy and traditional technologies and to devise architectural designs suitable to the climate. He noted that ECWA had actually begun to implement a project to develop the use of clay as a building material in Democratic Yemen, and that Egypt and Jordan had expressed interest in the project. With regard to subprogramme 4, Survey, analysis and evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of prefabrication in the ECWA region, he observed that most of the building systems introduced into the region by foreign companies had not undergone the necessary adaptation in order to suit local requirements and the local environment.

57. The representative of Iraq called for family size to be taken into consideration. He pointed out that determining average family size was of importance in establishing the number of dwellings required. That question was organically linked with the provision of the necessary potential in terms of raw materials and trained personnel specialized in planning and implementation, the allocation of the necessary investment to ensure the establishment of the functional value of the residential unit, and the adoption of exemplary designs from the point of view of site, plans, area, etc. He referred to the question of migration and its effect on the ecological make up of a city since temporary camps were established for migrant workers either at the project sites or in the suburbs. He noted the importance of handling the designation of industrial zones and work-sites in the light of considerations of distance, time, communications, telephone and electricity lines, water connections, etc. He spoke of the dangers of the encroachment of industrial zones, work-sites and workshops on residential areas and on agricultural land. He cited the need to take advantage of the wide-ranging study of the Wadi Al-Hamad basin, which had been prepared by the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Zones and Dry Lands and financed by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and from which Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic had benefited.

58. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization expressed regret that the subject of the Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories had not received attention in previous ECWA activities and programmes. This was so despite the fact that it was well known that Israeli policy in the occupied territories was based, in the final analysis, on emptying the Palestinian territories of their original inhabitants. During the period from 1967-1982 the Israeli authorities had deported not less than three quarters of a million Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. That was accomplished by numerous means, the most important of which was the settlement policy in the occupied territories. The number of Israeli settlements had reached 160 and the number of

settlers 160,000, or close to 15 per cent of the total population of the occupied territories. He called upon ECWA to include the subject in its programme of work for the biennium 1986-1987. ECWA should co-operate with certain international organizations, particularly the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), in order to establish a specific programme on the matter.

59. The representative of UNIDO noted that the tremendous development in the region had led to the wiping out of Arab urban districts, the liquidation of age-old rural patterns, and to the destruction of entire agricultural areas. The use of cement in building had resulted in a shortage and great waste of energy. The traditional building material and the wooden shutters which kept away sun rays had been discarded. He noted that the new designs had generally broken away from local urban architectural traditions. He called for respect of socio-cultural patterns of settlements and of local cultural sites and for the conservation of agricultural water and energy resources. He also called for respect of local technologies and resources in terms of building, population, manpower and expertise. He noted that all that called for national effort, co-operation and co-ordination between the bodies concerned with physical planning in the region, and support from ECWA and the United Nations. He expressed belief in possible co-operation between UNIDO and ECWA in the field of developing local building industries and the relevant technologies, as well as in developing local expertise for that purpose. With regard to the Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories he said it was possible to discuss means of co-operation between ECWA, UNIDO and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements in order to draw up a programme for consolidating Palestinian settlements.

60. The representative of Egypt underlined the importance of conserving cultivable lands. He cited Egypt's experience in making building bricks and avoiding the stripping of cultivable soil. He also referred to Egypt's pioneer experiment in building Qarna village, on the outskirts of Luxor, in a style that best suited the environment.

61. Iraq and the representative of Qatar seconded what the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization had mentioned about the Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories. With reference to human settlements, he underlined the importance of providing the basic facilities they needed, including transport and markets. He noted that though the imported building materials had some advantages they also had many disadvantages because in general they did not suit the environment in the region, in particular the climate. He also touched upon the question of the maintenance services of the huge buildings which had been built at considerable cost with the help of foreign companies.

62. The representative of Saudi Arabia noted that one of the problems of physical planning could be traced back to the type of education which young engineers had received in the region and which was alien to their environment. He called for developing native urban forms.

63. The Chief of the Human Settlement Division stated that all the points raised would be taken into consideration. He added that ECWA was co-operating with the State Organization for Population in Iraq. He said representatives of the secretariat held weekly meetings with two representatives of the Iraqi Organization for an exchange of information and views. As for maintenance of huge buildings, he noted that it was the business of other sectors. He added that the human settlements programme was only concerned with planning and not with sectoral matters. Referring to the question of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, he noted the General Assembly resolution which had entrusted the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements with preparing an annual study on the above-mentioned subject. However, the Centre could not carry out the task because the occupation authorities had barred the entry of the team of experts sent by the Centre.

6. Industrial development

64. The Chief of the joint ECWA/UNIDO Industry Division reviewed the major points which had been taken into consideration in drawing up the programme, chief among which was giving priority to select industrial projects that would help to promote existing or developing industries. Priority was also given to the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, UNIDO and the Arab Industrial Development Organization (AIDO). He stressed that the Division had worked in co-ordination with concerned regional and national organizations in drawing up joint industrial programmes. It had mainly co-operated with AIDO, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the Scientific Research Institute in Kuwait. He noted that the joint regional projects constituted 41 per cent of the total programme elements of the Division. The other elements reflected the priority the ECWA region gave to petrochemical, iron and steel, and agriculture-related industries.

65. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization underlined the importance of industry-related agricultural development in order to create additional manpower capable of strengthening the steadfastness of the inhabitants of the occupied territories. He also called for the updating of the invaluable study made by the ECWA Industry Division on industry in the occupied territories.

66. The representative of Iraq noted that the six elements of the programme were too general with the exception of some promising elements which stressed application aspects. He also underscored the significance of the question of petrochemicals in the light of the establishment of large-scale petrochemical industries in a number of countries in the region. He drew attention to the necessity of avoiding any duplication that might arise between Arab industries at the level of production capacities or marketing potentials.

67. The representative of Qatar underlined the importance of financing and organizing small-scale industries in order to serve national economies. He also stressed the importance of establishing industries founded on existing basic industries. He also emphasized the importance of training national cadres in the field of industry. He noted that that was precisely what his country needed to serve existing industries. He reviewed the problems of marketing the products of basic industries, such as iron and cement, in view of the strong foreign competition they faced and which threatened them with suspension or collapse. He also called for co-operation between ECWA and regional organizations, chief among which the Arab Gulf Co-operation Council, in studying prospects for marketing those products.

68. The representative of Saudi Arabia noted that the industrial development programme had devoted little attention to the element of training and developing human capabilities.

69. The representative of Iraq explained that the Council for Economic Unity had exerted efforts for concluding protocols and an economic agreement on the phases and forms of industrial co-ordination in sectoral domains. He called on ECWA to benefit from those efforts.

70. The Chairman of the Committee stressed the importance of providing the requisites of industrial development such as vocational training and cadre development. In that respect he referred to the activities of the Arab Industrial Development Organization.

71. The representative of the secretariat confirmed that the Industry Division would be updating the study on industry in the occupied territories which had been prepared years earlier with the assistance of UNIDO. He also confirmed that ECWA would be co-operating with the Arab and international organizations concerned with petrochemicals. The most recent manifestation of that co-operation had been the co-ordinating meeting on a joint industrial project in which ECWA had participated in Kuwait. He said that ECWA was paying special attention, in its 1986-1987 programme in the field of strategic industries, to the iron,

steel and textile industries. He promised that the financing of the smaller industries would be taken into account in that programme. At the same time, he pointed out that vocational training was beyond the scope of the Division's work, although it was covered by other secretariat programmes. The Division had, however, organized specialized training courses, including a training course for chemical engineers in Jordan in 1982, and three training courses were being organized jointly with Iraq in 1985 on computer-aided techniques in the industrial and engineering fields. Contacts were being made with the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology in Egypt and the Gulf Co-operation Council with a view to holding similar training courses.

7. Trade and development finance

72. The representative of the secretariat outlined the international trade programme and explained that it was focused on the trade commodity sectors, the strengthening and expansion of the intra-regional trade production in the region, and the promotion of trade with other developing countries. He said that, in view of resources limitations, the programme consisted of two elements: the first comprised an analytical review of developments in the external sector for the purpose of meeting the needs of end-users in governmental departments and research academies. The second element dealt with the trade sector in the field of services to which due attention had not been paid in the past. He explained that the objective of that element was to make a balanced analysis of production, consumption and exchanges in the services field. In that connection, ECWA was working in close co-operation with the Economic Council and the Council of Arab Economic Unity at the League of Arab States and also with other institutions which had acquired experience in that sphere.

73. The representative of Egypt expressed the hope that the programme would not be confined to a review of data and analyses, since it should transcend those aspects and include the submission of realistic proposals concerning ways and means to overcome obstacles impeding trade exchanges, in the full sense of the term, among the countries of the region. He said that the scope of such exchanges should be broadened to include trade in services rather than being confined solely to visible commodities.

74. The representative of Iraq said that external trade was an important issue for the member countries of ECWA in view of the nature of the export and import structure of those countries and the significant manner in which their economies were affected by the foreign trade sector. He indicated that development financing had also played a highly important role in view of the problems that some countries were facing in that aspect and also

due to their evident lack of technology and modern sophisticated methods of financing. He said that it would have been preferable to direct the programme towards a study of practical ways and means to overcome the problems and obstacles that were impeding the external trade of member countries. He proposed that the programme should include elements aimed at the establishment of national, regionally interlinked co-ordination centres with a view to the organization of effective, co-ordinated liaison channels for the promotion of economic and technical co-operation in that respect.

75. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization referred to the problems affecting the marketing of products in the occupied territories, particularly in the field of agricultural production, owing to the severe competition from Israeli products, including competition in regard to prices. This had led to a reduction in the volume of Palestinian products which had also become more difficult to sell. He referred to the problems of marketing citrus fruits from Gaza and noted that the inability to export was leading to economic collapse in the Strip in which the production of citrus fruits had been reduced by half. He requested ECWA to give attention to the question of marketing in the occupied territories. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization also reviewed the grave economic consequences that would result from the recent American-Israeli agreement on the establishment of a free zone. He called on ECWA countries in general to adopt necessary measures to cope with the dangers resulting from that agreement as it was one of the major forms of economic aid extended by the United States to the Israeli economy in a bid to save it from further collapse, and help it to infiltrate into the economies of the countries of the Arab region. Besides, the agreement would deepen Israel's intransigence in its occupation of the Arab territories and undermine the national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The representatives of Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia supported what he said.

76. The representative of Jordan said that his country, which was one of the principal producers of phosphate and potash, was also faced with marketing problems. He called for co-ordination with the Council of Arab Economic Unity and for a study of existing industries and the marketing problems with which they were faced with a view to eliminating those obstacles.

77. The representative of UNIDO proposed that current developments in the external trade of ECWA member countries should be monitored and compared with the developments that had taken place in recent years. He indicated that there was a need to examine the relationship between the development and commodity structure of external trade and the development of the industrial

infrastructure and trends in industrialization in other developing countries, and subsequently to compare anticipated industrial developments in the countries of the region with the expected development trends in external trade. He proposed that an evaluation study should be made of the pricing and subsidization policies applied to goods that were locally produced for export to those countries, and also to raw materials and semi-manufactured and processed goods that were imported from abroad, so that industrial protectionist policies could be evaluated. He also called for a study of protectionist customs tariff policies.

78. The representative of the secretariat replied that the activities of the programme on international trade were not confined to analysis since its objective was to draw up the findings and formulate practical proposals. With regard to development financing, he indicated that, in spite of its limited resources, ECWA had embarked on studies in the field of finance on subjects such as the role of regional financial institutions in promoting co-operation and integration in the ECWA region, implications for debtor and creditor countries of the ECWA region and, the role of joint ventures in economic integration in the region. He said that current projects in the field of economic integration would provide a basis for the recommendations needed for the formulation of national and regional policies. With regard to the problems of marketing in the occupied territories and Jordan, he referred to the need of undertaking independent studies on the subject within the limits of available resources. He indicated that ECWA was engaged in consultations with the Economic Commission for Africa with a view to identifying projects of common interest for co-operation in trade and integration between the two regions.

8. Natural resources

79. The officer-in-charge of the Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division reviewed the natural resources programme and explained that it was confined to a single subprogramme, namely water resources, comprising two programme elements. The objective of the first element was to formulate proposals to enhance the planning capabilities of the ECWA countries in the field of the development and conservation of the water resources needed for urban and rural use, and the evaluation of country and subregional projects in that field. The objective of the second programme element was water desalination with a view to producing sweet water to ensure the supply of water for domestic and agricultural use in selected countries of the ECWA region. He explained that that would require the use of appropriate technological means, particularly the use of new and renewable sources of energy. That programme element would be implemented

in close co-operation with the bodies concerned in the member countries and also with organs of United Nations and regional bodies that had acquired extensive experience in the field of water desalination.

80. The representative of Iraq said that the subject of water resources was important not only for ECWA but for the entire world. He proposed that the first subprogramme should concentrate on the subject of the management of water use and conservation projects in order to ensure their efficient use. He requested that a study be carried out on the optimum use of ground water and on methods for its conservation in order to safeguard its availability for coming generations. He indicated that benefit could be derived from studies that had been carried out by the secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers of Agriculture in that connection. He also requested that attention should be paid to the important question of the rights of riverine States. He proposed that the issue of water desalination be dealt with under the first subprogramme instead of the second subprogramme. He also proposed that the question of land reclamation should be dealt with under the second subprogramme, particularly since some countries in the region had extensive experience from which benefit could be derived in that field. He added that ECWA should co-operate with the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid Zones and Dry Lands in Damascus in order to formulate specific proposals that would be helpful to member countries, bearing in mind that a start had been made on the Wadi Al Hammad regional project which involved Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and in the development of which ECWA would also participate.

81. The representative of Qatar said that the programme should include a study on ways and means to rationalize the use and conservation of water resources for longer periods, and on ways to minimize wastage, in order to achieve the optimum use of water resources.

82. The representative of Yemen indicated that his country, which was dependent on rainfall, was suffering from a drought and from a lack of co-ordination in the use of available water. Although water use was being supervised by numerous bodies in Yemen there was little co-ordination between them.

83. The representative of Qatar drew attention to the need for studies on ways and means of using sewage effluent in agriculture and other spheres.

84. The representative of Saudi Arabia proposed that the topics should be scheduled in accordance with their importance, priority being given to the conduct of a survey of water resources, followed by the rationalization of the use of water resources, the recycling of water, etc.

85. The representative of Egypt raised the question of the Arab countries outside the ECWA region, such as the Sudan, which were suffering from a disastrous drought. He called for co-ordination with the Economic Commission for Africa in that respect. He added that benefit could be derived from the long experience acquired by the Egyptian Ministry of Irrigation and its organs on the subject of water in both Egypt and the Sudan.

86. The representative of Iraq noted that with regard to new water potentials there was both drainage and sewage water. He called attention to the need to benefit from Iraq's experience, as the country possessed a main spillway that constituted a water tributary up to the level of a principal river.

87. The representative of the secretariat said that the Commission was in contact with the Arab Centre for the Study of Arid and Dry Lands (ACSAD). He added that ECWA, together with UNESCO, was preparing a directory on hydrology institutes. He also referred to the 1982 ECWA study called "Development of Guidelines for Economic Use of Water in the ECWA Region". A study called "Wastewater Reuse and its Application in the ECWA Region" had been prepared and published.

9. Population

88. The officer-in-charge of the Social Development and Population Division made a short review of the four elements of the population programme which, in their totality, aimed at presenting a comprehensive picture of the current and future demographic situation in the region. The picture was based on an illustrative and analytical presentation which included demographic indicators and projections as well as relevant economic and social indicators. He reviewed the studies to be included in the programme for the forthcoming period chief among which were studies on infant and child mortality and demographic variables in urban areas. He also reviewed ECWA participation and co-operation with regional and international organizations concerned with population. He further referred to the agreement between ECWA and UNFPA on establishing a demographic data base at the regional level. It would co-operate with the League of Arab States in that respect. It was also agreed to use computers in establishing and operating that base, as well as to train the necessary cadres. Finally, he dealt with the programme element concerning manpower and its employment in the region. He stressed there would be further co-ordination among regional organizations in that direction.

89. The representative of Saudi Arabia called for the taking into account of the actual conditions in the ECWA countries. If there was a tendency to encourage family planning in a country

with an excessive population density, the youth might be encouraged to marry and form new families in countries with low population densities.

90. The representative of Iraq noted that the population programme focused on the demographic aspect at the expense of the question of manpower. He called for depending on population data as a basis for analysing the manpower situation in the region. He noted that ECWA activities within the framework of the manpower programme were concentrated in the industrial sector though the number of persons employed in that sector was limited compared with other sectors. He referred to the presence of many problems in that field including the issue of expatriate manpower which was growing and replacing Arab manpower. Other problems were related to the manpower structures and the policies concerned with stopping the emigration of expertise and manpower mobility inside and outside the region on the basis that the population issue and the development issues were interrelated. Accordingly the programme element must include a study of population and labour, population and education, and population and health.

91. The representative of Egypt drew attention to the necessity of making an ECWA study on the employment of foreign manpower despite the presence of local labour. He also seconded the proposal for incorporating manpower planning in development plans in the long run as far as the migrant-sending or migrant-receiving countries were concerned.

92. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization underlined the importance of paying due attention to manpower in the programme as only 31 per cent of the population programme budget was devoted to the programme element. He stressed the importance of developing Palestinian manpower, particularly the manpower that was under Israeli occupation. The occupation authorities had evacuated 750,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; at the same time they brought in 130,000 Israeli settlers and established 160 Israeli settlements. He added that the process of deportation covered whole families and concentrated on the working force with all its skills, specialties and professions. He also demanded that the programme element include a study of manpower in the occupied territories.

93. The representative of Qatar affirmed that concern for the development of the national work-force led to an improvement in its productivity, thereby limiting foreign migration to the region. He called attention to the danger of incoming foreign migration and the outgoing migration of nationals from the region. He called for a study of the effects of the continuance of the war on the migration rates of the population in the

region, and their impact on economic development. He also called for a study of natural causes affecting population movements, such as scarcity of water and resources. He stressed the importance of co-ordination with national authorities versed in such matters in order to avoid duplication and to make rational use of resources.

94. The representative of UNICEF called attention to the parameters actually used in the region and called for their elaboration and evaluation preparatory to the introduction of new parameters. He referred to the importance of developing systems for the recording of vital statistics so that data would be available to facilitate the elaboration of sound population projections. He called for the improvement of current modes of co-operation between the secretariat of the Council of Ministers of Health of the Gulf States, UNICEF, the World Health Organization and the ECWA secretariat in the infant mortality field. He referred to maternal mortality rates and said that about 60 per cent of births took place in the home with the assistance of untrained midwives. He noted the importance of co-operation with UNESCO in the field of the dissemination of population education with a view to introducing the subject into school curricula.

95. The representative of UNIDO said that the Programme needed to assess policy actually adopted in the region and not merely monitor statistics or survey variables. There should, accordingly, be a link between the population situation and development in the fields of industry and production. That would subsequently require the formulation of alternatives for use in the event of a suspension of activity in a given sector (construction, for example) or when the need arose to redeploy migrant labour.

96. The representative of Jordan echoed the remarks of the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization concerning the exploitation of the Arab work-force by the Israeli occupation and stated that Jordan was engaged in preparing a programme of action for the development of the West Bank. ECWA endeavours to examine the state of the work-force in the occupied Arab territories would consolidate the efforts being exerted by Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organization in that respect.

97. The officer responsible for the ECWA Manpower Programme said that additional resources would be required to satisfy the observations of delegations on expanding the scope of the Programme. He referred to the agreement concluded with the Arab Planning Institute in Kuwait for the holding, in November 1985, of an expert seminar on Arab manpower utilization and movement policies in order to arrive at precise recommendations to be

submitted to the next session of the Commission. He noted the need to prepare a study on the situation of the work-force in the occupied territories. A study would be issued in June 1985 on the basic features of the national work-force in the States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council. It would, of course, cover receiving countries, and the next step would be a study of the situation of the work-force in the sending countries in order to establish, at the end of the year, the basic features of the work-force at the level of the region as a whole. A report would also be issued during 1986 on the situation of the work-force in the region. Consultations with the Arab organizations concerned would continue so that the report would cover the entire Arab world.

98. The Deputy Executive Secretary of the Commission said that the observations made had had such ramifications and had been so multi-faceted that not all of them could be addressed over a two-year period in view of the limited budgetary resources. They must, however, be borne in mind by the programme officers concerned.

99. The representative of Iraq referred to the question of the continuance of the war and the threat that it posed to the stability of the population and the extent to which it could participate in the development process.

100. The representative of Saudi Arabia reiterated the observation of the representative of Iraq, stressing that it applied to all wars and disturbances in the Arab world as a whole.

10. Public administration and finance

101. The officer-in-charge of the Development Planning Division, presented the ECWA Public Administration and Finance programme. He stated that the orientation of the programme concentrated on the analysis of developments and trends in the region in the financial and monetary fields in order to improve the performance of member States in those fields and strengthen regional co-operation between them. He noted the importance of strengthening the role of public enterprises in promoting capital formation, employment and production. He added that the programme would concentrate on studying the most important problems confronting these enterprises in the fields of management, accounting, budgeting, manpower, marketing, etc.. He presented the programme element relating to investment incentives and their effect on encouraging savings and investment in the region in view of numerous laws promulgated by many countries on investment incentives and the encouragement of foreign investment by both individuals and corporations. That required a cost-benefit analysis and a critical evaluation of the incentives

promulgated along with their impact on achieving the objectives of development plans and achieving closer co-operation among the countries of the region.

102. The representative of Iraq called attention to studies prepared by Iraqi experts, in co-operation with the Arab Monetary Fund, and asked to what extent they might be used. He called for attention to be paid to the provision of investment incentives, because of their particular importance to the States of the region in stimulating the movement of capital, and for use to be made of the guide to investment legislation in the Arab region issued by the Arab Investment Company. There was a need for studies to be pragmatic.

103. The representative of Saudi Arabia said that there was a need for attention to be paid to public administration since studies on the subject had not accorded that element the consideration it deserved.

104. The representative of Qatar affirmed the importance of the subject of public administration, particularly in public institutions as against private institutions. He called for studies to concentrate on investment incentives and modalities for encouraging individuals or the private sector to invest funds so that investment by individuals would not go to non-productive activities.

105. The Chairman supported the proposals that had been made to confine the programme to public finance without touching on public administration, which he urged ECWA to deal with as a separate issue.

106. The officer-in-charge of the Development Planning Division explained that the limited resources of the programme should be used in an optimal manner. He stated that the topic of public administration was being dealt with at the country level through the national institutes of the countries of the region. Member States had allocated resources for the improvement of their public administration infrastructure and had also given attention to the training of personnel in the public sector. Furthermore, he stated that at the regional level the Arab Organization for Administrative Services (AOAS) was equally involved in assisting member countries to improve the structure and performance of their public administration. The Public Administration and Finance programme of ECWA was participating in the activities of AOAS. He explained that public administration had been omitted from the content of the programme for those reasons. With regard to investment incentives and guarantees, he indicated that contact would be established with the Arab Company for Investment Guarantee and that use would be made of the guide that had been established by that Company.

11. Science and technology

107. The officer-in-charge of the Natural Resources, Science and Technology Division gave an outline of the science and technology programme which focused on the two fundamental topics of the development of national technological capabilities and the improvement of the standard of technical skills and managerial capabilities in the field of science and technology. He explained that the programme strategy was based on strengthening the science and technology infrastructure at the national and regional levels and on assisting in the development of educational and technical institutions.

108. The representative of Iraq expressed the hope that concern with that issue would help to reduce the gap between the industrially developed countries and the developing countries. He pointed out that many studies and seminars had been conducted on that subject, although few practical measures had been adopted. He said that a number of countries in the region had ambitious projects in that respect and that ECWA should play a role in supporting such activities. He said that the most important factor with regard to the region was the human factor and the type of the systems adopted. It was expected that ECWA would play an important role in helping the countries of the region, particularly in connection with the training of cadres and the design and formulation of appropriate systems and schedules. He commended the manner in which the programme had been designed to encourage technical talents and to help to strengthen infrastructure at the national level. He added that all the technology transfer programmes were designed to generate technical studies based on in-depth research. He expressed his conviction that the proposed programme should be backed up by some form of training courses and by a selection of appropriate technology from its exporters to its importers. He also underlined the importance of reconsidering the timing of the programme elements in order to be able to keep up with the rapid changes in the field of technology. He also urged holding a two-stage meeting up to the end of the decade to follow up the Vienna Programme of Action for the transfer of technology.

109. The representative of Yemen inquired about the fields which involved the transfer of modern technology and called upon ECWA to operate with UNIDO and the Arab Industrial Development Organization in the conduct of studies on the transfer and selection of technology in the Arab world. He pointed out that the standardization of technological methods would make for closer relationships among the Arab countries in economic, scientific and even social fields. He proposed that two of the ECWA countries be selected for the application of the transfer of standardized technology.

110. The representative of Egypt drew attention to the need to specify two principal objectives on which the subsidiary objectives and programmes would be centred. Those two principal objectives were: the promotion of national and regional self-reliance; and the endeavour to apply and adopt appropriate technology to fulfil current needs and to promote an independent process to meet environmental concerns.

111. The representative of Saudi Arabia inquired about the manner in which that programme could fulfil its purpose in spite of the fact that it was new and would be carried out on a limited budget. He wondered whether the Division would be able to change patterns of education and training that were extremely difficult to alter. He said that, if it was the intention to decide in the light of country needs, that would be acceptable provided that there was co-ordination between the scientific research centres in the region.

112. The representative of Egypt stressed the need to use the talents of nationals of the region living in technologically developed countries in order to enhance development and provide scientific assistance in their countries.

113. The representative of Jordan referred to the difficulties facing the newly established industrial sector in his country and proposed that, as part of its Ad Hoc subprogramme, ECWA should enhance the region's scientific and technological capabilities by organizing workshops with a view to providing persons working in selected industries with training in modern technological and scientific methods in order to strengthen national industries in the countries of the region.

114. The representative of Iraq stressed the need to adapt technology to the needs of the people. He warned of the danger that such technology might serve the interests of the developed countries rather than those of the developing countries.

115. The representative of UNIDO endorsed the observation of the representative of Iraq on the need to make the objectives of the programme more precise in order to accord with the possibilities available while having regard for the dimensions of the development and the continuation over time of such a programme. He called for a review of objectives and stressed the importance of technological innovation, which was of a clearly dynamic character. He called for concentrating on the sectors and activities which could greatly help in the transfer of technology to the region. He also called for starting with an in-depth evaluation of the current practices of technology transfer for the purpose of working out regional rules for the control of technology transfer and the promotion of accumulative effect and economic yield.

116. The representative of Qatar noted that, with respect to the transfer and endogenization of technology, there were a variety of uses for scientific equipment in the ECWA countries and those countries had undergone rapid technological development. He called upon ECWA to eliminate the wide differences among the countries by preparing studies of such differences, and stressed the need to concentrate on the element of education and training to produce the required cadres.

117. The representative of the secretariat, responding to the points raised, expressed his agreement with the view that training was of the greatest importance in spite of its enormous cost in comparison with programme implementation. He referred to the workshop held in October 1983 with the participation of experts from the ECWA countries. He said that the programme implemented had had, for the most part, the direct participation of officials and experts from member countries. With regard to co-ordination, he said that the programme was currently directed towards implementation of the project on Scientific and technological co-operation among Western Asia countries financed by the Netherlands in co-operation with a number of institutions in ECWA countries. The programme always attempted to obtain funds from extrabudgetary resources.

12. Social development

118. The representative of the secretariat presented an analytical review of the elements of the social development programme and the relevant results. The programme involved the analysis of social change in the region at adverse social levels and of social institutions with changing values and incentives of changes in standards of living, of income distribution, and of the provision of social services with respect to both quality and quantity. It also involved the study of disabled persons and those subject to various disabilities and the ways and means for their care and rehabilitation, concentrating on those physically and socially disabled as well as on youth and the aged. The programme was also concerned with the social aspects of rural development in the ECWA region, concentrating on the questions of rural poverty, the relationship between man and land in the countryside and the problems of disguised unemployment. He stated that the social development programme would continue its efforts in co-ordination with all the relevant organizations at the national, regional and international level.

119. The officer responsible for the ECWA women's programme reviewed the programme and said that the programme elements had the goal of improving the social situation of women in the region and promoting their increased participation in overall development efforts. She referred to the strategy for development of the situation of Arab women in Western Asia to the

year 2000, adopted by the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, held at Baghdad from 3 to 6 December 1984. The programme derived its basic constituents from the religious and spiritual values and heritage of Arab civilization. She enumerated the programme elements of the women's subprogramme, exemplified by a study of the impact of socio-cultural changes on women in the region, a directory of Arab professional women for TCDC (Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries) activities in the ECWA region and the development of national and regional capabilities for the identification, formulation and implementation of projects for the development of women. The implementation of such a programme would require close co-operation and liaison with international and regional organizations.

120. The representative of Iraq proposed that the title of subprogramme 2.1, appearing on page 67 of document E/ECWA/XII/CP/6/Add.1, should be changed to "Impact of socio-economic changes among Arab women in the ECWA region" instead of "Impact of socio-cultural changes among Arab women in the ECWA region" because the entry of women into the work-place in industrial and agricultural establishments had brought about great social changes. She stressed the focal points of the strategy jointly drawn up by member States and their concern for the political participation of women and the development of the legal situation in the fields of work, production, education, training, housing and the family, as well as for feminist organizations. She wondered why the goals of the programme had been stated in a general manner instead of their being associated with those of the Strategy elaborated in that connection and adopted by member States, and why no connection or harmonization had been made between those goals and the subprogramme for women. She said that subprogramme 1, Social integration and change, did no more than extend the survey of those categories most in need, such as the elderly, the disabled, young people and migrant families. The publication envisaged on the subject did not specify which member countries would be included. She stressed the need for attention to rural development and for studies of the effects of the migration of men from the countryside to the towns, of the effect of modern technology on the role of rural women and the role of national institutions in agricultural training and guidance. She proposed amending the programme for 1986-1987 by selecting studies, to be carried out with the participation of member States, of the problems and needs of rural women and rural society, the effect of the migration of men from the countryside on the work of women in agricultural production, the economic value of the participation of women in agriculture and food production, and the development of equipment and appliances for use by women in agricultural tasks.

121. The representative of Saudi Arabia called for extending the scope of the social development programme to the family as a whole and not only to women. He also called for devoting particular attention to the problems of juvenile delinquency and drug addiction among youth.
122. In reply to the above observations the representative of the secretariat said the outlined goals linked socio-economic development to women's position which currently was halfway between tradition and modernity. She noted that the social aspect was emphasized with the aim of specifically highlighting the cultural aspect. She added that the development of national and regional capabilities for the purpose of specifying the drawing up and carrying out of projects for the advancement of women was in response to a specific demand by member States; the resources earmarked for that purpose were not sufficient to permit concentrating on the issue of childhood with which UNICEF was concerned, though the ECWA programme included activities which covered issues related to childhood within the framework of the family in general. She referred to the projects concerned with those topics implemented in co-operation with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.
123. The representative of the secretariat said that specifying four States without mentioning them in the bulletin had given rise to the hope by each member State that it would be covered by the study. He said that the secretariat had adopted a realistic approach in coping with the problem of social development in view of the limited resources. For that reason the ECWA secretariat had worked in co-ordination and co-operation with specialized organizations and the ECWA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division.
124. Iraq and other member States proposed changing the name of the Economic Commission for Western Asia into "The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia" as that would give due attention to ECWA social development activities.
125. The Chairman endorsed the amendment of the words "socio-cultural changes" to "socio-economic changes" in the title of social development subprogramme 2.1 and supported the proposal that the name of the Commission should be changed to "the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia".
126. The representative of Saudi Arabia seconded the proposal. He said that the name with which the Commission had begun had been "the United Nations Economic and Social Office" and added that what interested member countries was the quality of the activities undertaken and the process of evaluating them.
127. The Chief of the Regional Commissions Liaison Office, United Nations Secretariat, New York, said that the proposal was a

worthy one. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific had changed its name 10 years before, having formerly been known as the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East. Social aspects were of particular importance to the countries of the region. The Economic Commission for Western Asia, while it had not changed its name, had expanded its activities to cover social aspects also.

128. For the measures taken by the Committee in that regard, the resolutions adopted by the Committee at its third session, contained in annex I to the present document, can be consulted.

13. Statistics

129. The Chief of the ECWA Statistics Division stated that the basic objectives of the ECWA statistics programme were: to provide the statistics and data required for the planning and monitoring of economic and social development in the region, whether to member States, the various units of the Commission itself or the scientific research institutions and organizations active in the region; to assist member States in developing the endogenous capacity of their statistics departments to gather, standardize and interpret statistics; and to endeavour to standardize concepts, definitions, terms and measurements, to make use of international classifications, to apply the latest statistical methods and techniques in standardizing data and preparing cross-tabulations at the appropriate time. Among its three subprogrammes, the Division had given highest priority to those aspects relating to updating ECWA statistics, the establishment of a data base, the dissemination of the statistics gathered in the Statistical Abstract of the ECWA Region, and the publication of available statistics in such a way as to reduce the time lag between the period to which the statistics referred and the date of publication. The secretariat was assisting member States to develop national statistics, whether through the direct provision of technical services at their request or through the intergovernmental statistical meeting which was held in order to standardize concepts and methods in the fields of income, consumption, population censuses and migration statistics. The Division also issued specialized reports and periodic technical publications in the field. He made particular reference to the modalities of and prospects for statistical co-operation among ECWA members and between ECWA and the following: the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics in Baghdad; the Arab Planning Institute in Kuwait; the statistics department of the League of Arab States; the Council of Arab Economic Unity; the Arab Monetary Fund; the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development; the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries; the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development; and other regional and international organizations.

130. The representative of Bahrain expressed the desire that ECWA should prepare model statistical schemata based on those used by other United Nations organizations with due regard for their adaptation to the circumstances and characteristics of the region. He also called upon ECWA, in preparing handbooks for the conduct of statistical studies and surveys, to cover all stages of their implementation. Greater appropriations should be made for statistical work in the field of technical assistance in view of the importance of statistics in the development planning process.

131. The representative of Iraq referred to the importance that statistical data and indicators had by virtue of the fact that they provided a basis for the preparation of country development plans. He urged ECWA to undertake to train high-level statistical personnel in national statistical organizations who would be capable of strengthening their existing statistical capabilities. This could be brought about by the placement of experts in such organizations at particular times during the conduct of certain surveys and censuses. He called for a united effort by Arab organizations issuing statistical publications in order to avoid dissipating the capacities and resources available. He noted, in that context, that most of the final outputs of the programme represented technical publications. He stressed the importance of making a concerted effort to develop the statistical data base. The League of Arab States should, in particular, study the possibility of establishing an Arab statistical information network. He called upon ECWA to accord greater attention to the subject of national accounts, since many of States of the region lacked expertise in the collection and utilization of such data.

132. The representative of Egypt called for shifting from the programme's aim of helping member States in the field of basic statistics needed for national economy planning to helping them in developing national capabilities in the field of statistics.

133. The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization expressed gratitude to ECWA for the technical assistance provided by the Statistics Division to the Palestine Statistical Bureau. He also expressed the hope that the technical publications issued by ECWA would include data on the Palestinian people in occupied Palestine.

134. The representative of Egypt called attention to the efforts of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in the field of general social and economic studies, as exemplified by the activities of its centre in Ankara. He wondered to what extent there was co-ordination between that organization and ECWA.

135. Responding to the comments of representatives, the Chief of the Statistics Division said that ECWA was actually using the international classifications in its work, suitably adapted to the circumstances and needs of member States. He referred to the efforts made to prepare technical handbooks to assist States in survey operations, and to the three training courses held by ECWA in Damascus, Amman and Cairo, in co-operation with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Baghdad, in the field of household surveys. The secretariat was prepared to make a greater effort in that field in the event that additional funds became available. The representative of the secretariat endorsed the view that there was a need to strengthen statistical personnel in the Arab States, provided that the necessary resources were available. That was particularly so since such personnel tended to leave after completion of their training, attracted by other regions. The publication on national accounts studies being issued by ECWA was, from the point of view of its content, one of the richest reference works in the field. It did not conflict with any of the activities of other organizations since it was more comprehensive than the publications issued by them. He also stated that the introduction of national accounts at fixed prices was a fundamental step needed by those working in the development fields. He noted that ECWA was in contact with the Organization of the Islamic Conference centre in Ankara through their joint participation meeting convened by both parties although the limited nature of the resources available might not permit immediate joint activities. He said that the publications issued by the Division would contain statistics and data relating to the Palestinian people, particularly in the occupied Arab territories.

14. Transport and communications

136. The officer-in-charge of the Transport and Communications Division reviewed the Division's programme, pointing out that it had been designed to cover the basic issues and needs of the region and noting the concern, in its formulation, for continuity between the activities of the current and the coming bienniums. The new programme nevertheless introduced new elements more in keeping with the new needs of member States in the field. He then reviewed, in brief, the six programme elements contained in the programme.

137. The representative of Egypt called for greater attention to be paid to the joint initiative taken by Jordan and Egypt in the opening of the Aqaba-Nuweiba road. He expressed the wish that programme element 1.2, or another programme element, should include that matter.

138. The representative of Qatar noted that the ECWA programme had concentrated on maritime transport and the training required

in that field. He said that many ECWA countries had built large ports which had cost fabulous sums of money and that they had not been utilized to their optimal capacity. He called on the secretariat to propose solutions for the best use of ports, adding that it required a co-ordination of efforts with competent organizations, such as the Arab Academy for Maritime Transport in the United Arab Emirates.

139. The representative of Jordan seconded what the representative of Egypt had said referring to the promotion of co-operation between the two countries in the field of maritime transport. He added that the ECWA study of the Egyptian-Jordanian experiment would help in highlighting and assessing pioneer experiments with the aim of promoting co-operation in that respect.

140. The representative of Iraq made several statements stressing the urgency of giving priority to the transport and communications sector in the ECWA Programme of Work in view of its strategic importance. He called for speeding up the implementation of the second part of programme element 1.1, Development of national and multinational merchant fleets in the ECWA region. Referring to the procrastination of the activity concerned with multimodal transport and transfer of modern technology, he called on the secretariat to undertake that activity despite the insufficient number of its Professional posts. He urged member States to take part in the Transport and Communications Decade starting that year, or early in 1986, by drawing up national programmes of work and implementing them as quickly as possible. He noted that such an approach would yield economic returns to the countries of the region. He stressed that the first stage must be carried out at the level of the ECWA region within the framework of an integrated programme that would examine the possibility of linking that region with other regions. In that context he inquired about means of co-ordination between the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and the expected time for starting implementation of such co-ordination.

141. The representative of Saudi Arabia reviewed his country's efforts in the field of developing transport and communications. He drew attention to the problem of containers calling on different countries and the consequences, chief among which was the problem of smuggling.

142. In reply, the representative of the secretariat stressed that the secretariat was studying the dimensions and development of the Egyptian-Jordanian experiment as an example of regional co-operation in that field. He referred to the Division's concern with the question of training which figured implicitly in

the context of the programme elements rather than as a separate programme element. He stressed that ECWA was in close contact with the Arab Academy for Maritime Transport in Sharjah. He also noted that the secretariat's limited means at the time would not help it to extend the scope of the programme of the Transport and Communications Division to other modes of transport. With reference to the problems of transportation by containers, the representative of the secretariat said they could be dealt with in the context of programme element 1.1.

15. Transnational corporations

143. The officer-in-charge of the Development Planning Division, which was entrusted with the management of the work programme of the joint ECWA/UNCTC Unit on Transnational Corporations, reviewed the three major activity areas of the United Nations on Transnational Corporations with which it operated closely. The three areas were: (1) The Code of Conduct on Transnational Corporations; (2) Research on the economic, social, political and cultural impact of transnational corporations (TNCs) in the countries in which they operated; and (3) Provision of information on TNCs and of technical assistance in matters relating to host country dealings with TNCs. As for the Code of Conduct, the work programme of the Unit had concentrated during the last two years on an assessment of the relevance of the Code, to the ECWA region. An intergovernmental meeting was envisaged for 1986 to discuss the Code and its implications for the ECWA region. Under the second area of activity three elements were envisaged: contribution of TNCs to development objectives of host countries, operation of transnational banks in the region with the possibility of participating in an interregional project on the subject, which was currently being discussed and debated at the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC), at Headquarters, and examination of laws and regulations governing the operations of TNCs in the region. With respect to the third area of activity, the programme was confined to the collection of information on TNCs, and to assisting UNCTC in identifying the technical assistance requirements of member countries and to participate in meeting those requirements through advisory services, workshops, seminars, technical assistance projects, etc.

144. The representative of Iraq suggested that the programme would formulate a standardized contract to be adopted in concluding conventions with multinational corporations in order to minimize the impact of the negative activities of transnational corporations on ECWA countries. He also proposed making a detailed study on turnkey projects and the appropriate technological know-how and options for such projects. Referring to subprogramme 3 on strengthening the capability of host

developing countries in dealing with matters related to transnational corporations, he expressed the hope that it would prepare a directory for TNCs based on data.

145. The representative of Saudi Arabia observed that the question of encouraging Arab national corporations and joint ventures did not figure in the programme. He noted that those corporations were growing rapidly and accordingly suited the policy of rapid growth which the countries of the region had opted for. He also drew attention to the benefit to be derived from the experiences of the multinational corporations.

146. The representative of the secretariat said that efforts were under way towards the adoption of the code of conduct as a standardized formula to be used in signing conventions with transnational corporations. He further said the meeting envisaged in 1986 would endeavour to endorse a unified stand to be adopted by all ECWA countries. He said that the idea of preparing a detailed study on turnkey projects would be borne in mind. With reference to disseminating information on transnational corporations to ECWA countries, the representative of the secretariat said the Commission was co-ordinating efforts with UNCTC in New York in order to provide the ECWA countries with the information they needed. He also stated that the encouragement of Arab joint ventures was not within the purview of the ECWA work programme on TNCs.

16. Technical co-operation

147. The representative of the secretariat, introducing the programme on technical co-operation activities, referred to the practical and field nature of those activities and explained that they responded to the concerns expressed in the observations made by delegations. He said that they consisted of two elements: the first related to regional advisory services and the second to the implementation of practical, applied and field projects. In the case of regional advisory services, it was well known that ECWA had a number of experts and regional consultants who, at the request of member countries, were helping to tackle specific problems and to formulate development plans and strategic policies in economic and social fields. They were also providing advice and participating in educational and training programmes organized by national institutions and regional and Arab organizations. He explained that the success of the activity was largely dependent on the desire of member countries to benefit from those services by submitting to the ECWA secretariat requests containing details of the advisory services required and the most suitable dates for visits by consultants. He said that the secretariat was endeavouring to ascertain the priority needs of member countries in view of the limited number of its

technical consultants. He added that, in 1985, the secretariat was intending to use funds allocated for that purpose from the regular budget of the United Nations in order to provide regional advisory services in eight fields, five of which had already been designated: development planning; the identification, formulation and appraisal of industrial projects and the development of human resources; national accounts, economic statistics and the design and conduct of household surveys; and transport and communications. Three other fields would be specified in consultation with member countries. He indicated that UNIDO would be financing a post of regional consultant in mechanical engineering. UNFPA would be financing a post of regional consultant in demographic analysis and a post of regional consultant in population statistics. UNDP would be financing three or four consultancy posts within the context of the household surveys services projects in the region. The second element of the technical co-operation activities, namely the implementation of practical and field projects, would be financed from extrabudgetary resources. He added that some of those projects would be financed by the UNFPA and that a training course would also be organized in the use of programme packages for demographic analysis. Other projects would be financed by the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women. The UNDP would be funding a number of projects in the field of household surveys, the development of data and the micro-electronics industry, the development of low-cost, highly energy-efficient buildings, new and renewable energy, and the development and exchange of information on sea transport. He confirmed that ECWA would continue to participate in the implementation of the project for the development of statistical services in Yemen. He also explained that the financing bodies would seek the views of member countries on the proposed projects before agreeing to finance them. Technical participation by member countries in the financing of some projects would encourage other financing bodies to finance more national and regional projects.

148. The representative of Egypt proposed that, in regard to advisory services, expansion should concentrate on the production process relating to basic information, data and surveys.

149. The representative of Yemen thanked ECWA for the technical advice with which his country had been provided in the field of economic and social development from the regular budget and also from extrabudgetary resources.

150. The representative of Iraq called for an increase in the subprogramme and programme elements relating to technical co-operation activities among the countries of the region since that was a basic requirement for the achievement of economic

co-operation, collective self-reliance and independence in the ECWA region. He referred to various fields to which special attention should be paid, including training which would facilitate the use of the technical expertise and skills. He called for a study defining the conditions for the employment of experts in the ECWA countries. He also called for the holding of periodic meetings of heads of national technical co-operation agencies in the region and drew attention to the need for co-ordination between ECWA technical co-ordination programmes and the programmes adopted in the Buenos Aires Programme of Action. He pointed out that the programme elements relating to the co-ordination of advisory services did not specify those advisory fields. He drew attention to the need to clarify the relationship between the advisory services contained in the first programme element and those contained in the activities that had already been discussed.

151. The representative of Qatar called for a clearer definition of the nature of the activities undertaken by the Technical Co-operation Unit in order to clarify the manner in which co-ordination would take place between it and the other ECWA divisions. He wished to know the names of the countries that would benefit from the activities and projects undertaken by that Unit and other divisions. He added that all member countries should benefit, even if only from a single project, in order to promote a close relationship between the secretariat and all member countries without exception.

152. The representative of Egypt supported the view expressed by members of delegations concerning the need for further information on the projects to be implemented, the progress that had been made, the executing agencies, and the names of the countries that had been selected for the implementation of the projects. He noted that the majority of those projects would be financed by bodies other than ECWA; in fact, 24 projects would be implemented by those bodies.

153. The representative of Yemen said that his country was among the countries that had benefited from the technical co-operation activities. He pointed out that the ECWA secretariat had responded to the requests submitted by member countries.

154. The representative of UNDP said that most of the projects that were expected to be implemented in co-operation with UNDP were under consideration and some had already been approved in principle. He drew attention to the fact that some of those projects might not be approved for one reason or another.

155. The representative of the secretariat commented that the financing mentioned in the document referred only to the

financing of project management and not to the financing of the projects themselves. He indicated that the family surveys projects in Qatar had been instrumental in setting up a family surveys programme which included social surveys of youth and women etc.. He added that the names of the countries benefiting from those projects would be given in the progress report. Consideration would be given to the question of holding a meeting of heads of technical co-operation agencies in the ECWA countries. He pointed out that training required the availability of the necessary funds and expressed the hope that some member countries would help in that respect. He emphasized that training was a component of the projects that had been implemented, including a family survey project in the region and statistical project in Yemen. With regard to technical consultancy, he explained that ECWA published and distributed to member countries a bulletin containing the curricula vitae and specialities of United Nations consultants at ECWA, together with a description of the services that they could provide.

156. The Deputy Executive Secretary welcomed the idea of holding a meeting of heads of technical departments. However, he referred to the low level of participation by member countries in the seminars and meetings held by ECWA and noted that a number of member countries sometimes failed to send representatives to take part in such meetings. He called upon member countries to increase the fruitful co-operation with a view to producing realistic ideas that would enhance technical co-operation among the ECWA countries.

D. Discussions of the items of the provisional agenda
for the ECWA twelfth session

Agenda item 8

1. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission: progress made in the implementation of the work programme (E/ECWA/XII/5, and Add.1/Part I and II, and Add.2 to Add.11)

157. The Chief of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit at ECWA reviewed the progress made in the implementation in the programme of work for 1984-1985. He said that the achievements realized gave a full picture of each programme element. He drew attention to the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work concerning the promotion of co-operation and co-ordination activities between water resources and marine resources projects in the ECWA region and stressed the methodology study on the subject and the fact that it was a final product. He referred to the study on current issues in Western Asia and reviewed the third study which was the complete end

product of the programme undertaken for the benefit of the least developed countries in the ECWA region. The two other documents gave a brief outline of the achievements realized during the biennium 1984-1985.

158. The representative of Iraq, commenting on document E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.1/Part I said that the purpose of that document was to provide information concerning the achievements realized during 1984 and within the context of 16 different sectors. He said that it should have indicated the magnitude of the achievements and the reasons for non-implementation or postponement.

159. The representative of Qatar expressed the hope that ECWA would explain the reasons and the obstacles that had prevented the implementation of the scheduled programmes. He also hoped that ECWA would bear in mind the comments made by member countries when implementing the second part in 1985 in order to avoid unnecessary expenditure and make the requisite efforts during the biennium 1986-1987.

160. The representative of Saudi Arabia called for incorporating the following in the report of the Technical Committee: Having studied the document on the programme of action and priorities submitted by the Technical Committee, and in accordance with its resolutions, the Committee recommends the following: (a) a realistic study of the actual situation in every sector in the countries of the region so that the report might reflect the actual state of affairs, its development as well as its positive and negative aspects; (b) co-ordination with the national, regional and international organizations in order to avoid duplication and to regulate joint action; (c) specifying the sums allocated to every section instead of mentioning percentages; and (d) distribution of technical bulletins and documents on every sector when the discussion turns to it or to the study of its contents. The representative also requested that every document contain a list of the projects that had been actually implemented, the number of experts and the sums earmarked for them in figures and not percentages. The documents should also shed light on the problems the projects had faced and the proposed solutions.

161. The Chairman of the Technical Committee supported the proposals made by the representatives of Iraq, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

162. The representative of Iraq drew attention to the fact that, according to the documents of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations concerning the implementation of ECWA programmes, the number of programmes

during the biennium 1982-1983 for which the requisite funds had been allocated from the regular budget of the United Nations comprised 117 elements of which only 40 had been implemented. That implied that the standard of performance of ECWA was low in comparison with that of the other regional commissions in Africa, Asia and Latin America. He said that the delegation of Iraq wished to know the number of ECWA programmes in 1984 and the number of those that had been changed. He also requested an evaluation of developments in the standard of performance of ECWA in regard to programme implementation.

163. The Chief of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit at ECWA, replying to comments that had been made, emphasized that the secretariat agreed with the comments and views that had been expressed by the representatives. He said there was an urgent need for greater clarification in order to achieve further interaction between the secretariat and member States in order to attain the requisite standard of performance. He shared the views of the delegation of Iraq concerning the need to give an account of the achievements realized during the year 1984 and said that that would be taken into consideration in coming years. With regard to the comments concerning the formulation of the programme and ways to present it in a more convenient and precise manner, he confirmed that the secretariat shared that view. He said that, although the current method was that employed for the submission of programmes to United Nations commissions, the secretariat would endeavour to provide more clarifications in future. However, although that would lead to greater mutual understanding, it was not an adequate solution. There was a need to devise appropriate ways and means of ensuring a high level of effective participation by delegations at the intergovernmental technical meetings that were due to be held during the coming year and which were intended to be "programme meetings" rather than "technical meetings". He said that that would provide an opportunity for the reformulation and reorientation of programmes. He went on to say that the coming programme would be backed up by technical advice from governmental experts which would be presented in detail to the members of the Committee. The numerous comments and proposals concerning the programme would be taken into consideration by ECWA and would be included in the programme during its reformulation within the context of the next budget. With regard to the comments of delegations concerning the publications, the end product had been designated as publications at the request of the United Nations so that the necessary funds could be allocated thereto. He emphasized that a publication was not an objective in itself; its contents merely reflected the endeavours, studies, papers and reports submitted to technical meetings, for example, and its issue was useful for planning purposes.

164. The representative of Egypt said that the amendments that had been proposed during the meetings should be taken into consideration by ECWA and should be incorporated in the next programme.

165. The representative of Egypt asked why his country had not been mentioned in document E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.2. He also made a comment on document E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.3 in connection with the need to accelerate the process of economic co-operation and integration in the region in view of the changing international situation with regard to aspects such as the transfer of resources, the liberalization and expansion of trade and labour mobility.

166. The representative of Saudi Arabia said that the flow of capital between countries was not dependent solely on political conditions since it was also affected by financial and administrative systems which might not be attractive to investors. With regard to publications, he thought that subject review documents should differ from technical studies. He proposed that the programme of work and priorities should include details concerning what had or had not been achieved.

167. The representative of Iraq emphasized that joint Arab ventures constituted a realistic and practical means of achieving the integration objectives towards which the Arab countries were aspiring. He said that those ventures were playing an important role in the fundamental development of the Arab economies and were a reflection of the organic economic relationship between them. He stressed the need for compliance with the provisions contained in the Charter of Joint Arab Economic Action which advocated the pursuit of joint Arab economic action in isolation from inter-Arab conflicts. He said that the study on the subject should examine the manner in which the Arab private sector was contributing towards joint Arab ventures.

168. The Chairman of the Committee agreed with the comments made in connection with joint Arab ventures. He said that the study was an important project and that those recommendations should be transmitted to the Governments in the region.

169. The representative of Iraq inquired whether, in regard to the studies, the member countries were being asked merely to provide information or to take a specific decision. He said that some research projects were of an academic nature and had a fact-finding purpose, while others led to a draft resolution or partial resolution. He described the conclusions contained in the documents as being of a general nature.

170. The Chief of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit said that the end products had previously taken the form of a

"report to the Commission" and questions had been raised concerning the usefulness of submitting a report to the Commission. A report should contain specific recommendations and precise proposals, but those reports had not fulfilled that objective. Accordingly, it had been decided that they should take the form of studies or publications. If they were useful enough and contained tangible proposals, they were submitted to the Committee in the form of a report for discussion.

171. The representative of Qatar, referring to document E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.2, "Recent developments in international trade and payments in countries of Western Asia: A review", said that the petroleum-producing countries had suffered more than others from the economic stagnation to which the document referred and which had had an adverse effect on world demand for oil. The other developing countries were in a similar situation as a result of declining exports and constantly increasing imports. He added that that situation had placed an additional burden on their balances of payments. He indicated that, notwithstanding the principles and objectives set forth in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade which were intended to promote equitable participation by the developing countries in international trade, those endeavours had not resulted in any notable progress. Statistics showed that the exports of the ECWA countries had fallen by 12.6 per cent in 1981 and 14.5 per cent in 1982. Furthermore, it was estimated that the decline in exports during the biennium 1983-1984 would amount to 16 per cent in spite of the fact that the countries of the region were giving considerable attention to that question since the export industries that they had established were being severely affected by the international economic situation. He called upon ECWA to give attention to trade among its member countries and to compile a statistical table showing the volume and evolution of that trade. In that connection, he referred to the case of the Gulf Co-operation Council which had liberalized trade among its members by allowing the customs-free import of locally produced goods and reducing the differentials between the customs dues that they imposed on foreign goods, with a view to standardizing customs duty and establishing a uniform customs system. He referred in particular to the fact that the volume of trade between Qatar and the ECWA countries had not been affected by current economic factors; on the contrary, it was constantly increasing.

172. The representative of Egypt reiterated an inquiry that his delegation had already made concerning the reasons for the absence of statistical data on Egypt in the field of trade. He also reiterated his previous question concerning the extent of co-operation and co-ordination between the Transport and Communications Division at ECWA and the Economic Commission for

Africa (ECA) body supervising the construction of the international highway linking Cairo to Gaborone (Botswana) across eastern Africa.

173. The officer-in-charge of the External Trade Programme at ECWA explained that a study of the situation in Egypt required a large staff. However, when Egypt became a member of ECWA the resources allocated to those studies had not been increased. He promised that, with effect from the coming year, the secretariat would be compiling statistical data on Egypt and the economic and social survey that had been concluded in the current year would include new statistics for 1983 and most of 1984.

174. The Committee moved on to consider document E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.4 concerning the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s in Favour of the Least Developed Countries in the ECWA Region. The representative of the secretariat referred to the international meetings that were due to be held on that subject and to the importance of consultations among member countries in that respect. He gave an account of the endeavours of the secretariat to follow up and monitor the implementation of that programme in Democratic Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic and what ECWA substantive contributions had been so far within the frame of its work programme.

175. The representative of the secretariat referred to the difficulties impeding development in those two countries as a result of lack of resources and the occurrence of natural disasters such as the earthquake and floods in both Yemens and the fact that, although tremendous resources had been made available, mainly by the States of the Gulf Co-operation Council, as part of the relief operation, those resources had not been adequate to meet the needs of those countries with regard to the requirements of reconstruction and objectives specified in the SNPA.

176. The representative of the Yemen Arab Republic confirmed his country's need for aid to support the repair and reconstruction work. He said that Yemen had not yet been able to overcome the effects of the damage that occurred during the earthquake since the resources required amounted to \$750 million. However, his country was grateful for the various amounts of aid that it had received from Arab and friendly countries.

177. The representative of Democratic Yemen expressed appreciation of ECWA efforts in following up the implementation of the Substantive New Programme of Action in Favour of the Least Developed Countries. He noted that though his country had made some progress in development depending on its own resources and

on the aid extended by brotherly and friendly countries, the two Yemens were still facing development problems in the fields of social services, food production and balance of payments deficits, in addition to natural disasters. All that underlined their need for further aid and soft loans from various donor countries.

178. The representative of Iraq said that aid was required by the least developed countries not only within the ECWA region but throughout the world. In future, therefore, reference should be made in a balanced manner to the aid provided by ECWA for the least developed countries in general.

179. The representative of Qatar, referring to document E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.7, on the Report on the Seminar on Methods of Agricultural Data Collection, said that his country had applied some of the recommendations of the Baghdad Seminar (1-4 December 1984), particularly in the agricultural sphere, in spite of the fact that the agricultural sector was small. He called upon the Arab States to implement the recommendations adopted during the Seminar.

180. The representative of Iraq referred to the Commission's report on the status of statistics dealing with international migration in the ECWA region (E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.8) and requested ECWA to give attention to the question of immigration into the region. He drew attention to the fact that the report dealt with emigration from the region, whereas the project referred to the migration of labour into the countries of the region. He had hoped that the report would first of all have been submitted to the member countries for their comments. In short, he regarded the project as incomplete and as a mere review of available sources of data in the region. He went on to say that the paper had not given a precise definition of the "enumeration unit" in spite of the fact that that unit constituted the basis for data collection. He said that it would have been possible to compile preliminary migration statistics that transcended a mere survey.

181. The representative of the Statistics Division at ECWA explained that the purpose of the report was to highlight a specific problem and show that the situation in regard to immigration was unsatisfactory. The survey constituted a first step towards the publication of a statistical guide or handbook that would outline the situation in the region and provide guidelines for the future.

182. The representative of Iraq, referring to the report on monetary and financial issues and developments in the ECWA region (E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.9), said that the conclusions reached in the study referred to the 1970s and were not necessarily applicable

to the 1980s. He called for a rewording of the final paragraph of the conclusions of the study which contained severe and general criticism of the budgetary systems in the oil and non-oil producing countries of Western Asia.

183. The representative of the secretariat said that a number of achievements had been noted in certain countries. There were, however, other countries which needed greater impetus in that direction. Work might be facilitated by the elaboration of a system for measuring budget performance. The secretariat was prepared to look into the issue in the light of the clarification made.

184. The representative of Saudi Arabia said that delegations wished to co-operate with ECWA and to provide the Division with the required information. He expressed the desire for comparative studies to be made, identifying by name certain countries which suffered difficulties so that such difficulties could be avoided.

185. The representative of Iraq said that the paragraph should be reworded taking the remarks of the representative of Saudi Arabia into consideration.

186. The representative of Egypt drew the Commission's attention to the fact that Egypt should not again be ignored. He was not convinced by the reasons presented to the effect that the addition of data on Egypt would increase the financial burdens. Any study that ignored Egypt did not give a true picture of the region since Egypt, given its economic activity and the size of its population, was a factor in the region that could not be ignored.

187. The representative of Qatar asked what sources were used in the study, referring to the remark contained therein that the current policy of Qatar remained generally conservative since it had kept growth in expenditure in step with growth in revenue and government spending had therefore dropped by 14.4 per cent in 1982. The budget authorities of Qatar had begun to use the Muslim calendar four years before and the financial year now began with the month of Rajab each year. He requested that the true state of affairs with respect to the figures be observed.

188. The representative of Iraq expressed doubt as to the soundness of certain sources and some of the information contained in the document, such as that Iraq was heavily dependent on its oil exports for revenue and that income and consumption taxes had an insignificant share in Government revenue. He added that expenditure on development in Iraq was increasing in spite of wartime conditions.

189. The representative of the secretariat said that studies were based on primary sources such as information issued by official government bodies. Much information was of a provisional nature when made available and certain information was given with an indication that it would later be modified. Information often pertained to a previous year, and that was the case in many countries of the region. Often international sources were also used such as UNCTAD, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and statistics from these sources could be regarded as reliable by member States. The report had been communicated to member States for their comments and for comparison with other available information.

190. The representative of Iraq, referring to the Report to the Commission on Draft Procedures and/or Draft Convention as Measures to Facilitate Border Crossings (E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.10), asked what was the purpose of the border crossing convention mentioned in the conclusions reached in the document. He wondered whether it was the case that approval was being requested for the secretariat to prepare a draft to facilitate border crossings and whether that would be carried out in consultation with member States.

191. The representative of Saudi Arabia referred to the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Technical Aspects of Land Transport Harmonization and Standardization, held in Baghdad from 19 to 22 November 1984, indicating that the recommendations contained in the report might be a simplification of the results of the Meeting.

192. The representative of Iraq said that the joint guaranteeing association for Arab countries for which the experts had called might lead to duplication in joint Arab economic action. The ECWA countries did not need to establish new institutions and what was required was co-ordination with the authorities concerned, the specialized Arab organizations and the League of Arab States.

193. The representatives Saudi Arabia and Egypt requested that the report of the session should state that the Committee took note of the document without any statement of approval of the recommendations contained therein.

194. In connection with the Promotion of Co-operation and Co-ordination of Activities Pertaining to Water and Sea Resources Projects in the ECWA Region (E/ECWA/XII/5/Add.1), the representative of Saudi Arabia expressed the belief that the subject of water resources had received thorough discussion. He proposed that the Chairman should prepare a recommendation to the Council of Ministers of Agriculture of the region concerning the conduct of surveys and the rationalization of water use.

195. The representative of the secretariat noted that a comprehensive survey of water resources in the countries of the region was currently under way and that hopes were high for outstanding results which would be submitted to the next session.

196. The Chairman stressed the need to include in the recommendations the question of water rationalization and the use of sullage and waste water for productive purposes.

197. The representative of Iraq called attention to the need to adhere to rational procedures in the discussion of reports and documents. Deliberations had been conducted in the reverse order, and the Committee, instead of beginning with the programmes implemented, had begun its debate with plans for the future and had left untouched those actually put into effect. Due regard should be had for the practical and rational ordering of deliberations in the future.

198. The representative of Jordan proposed that the Commission, before embarking on the preparation of the programme of work and priorities, should inform member States of its intention to do so. It should request them to provide it with the priority national projects that would accord with the programmes included in their development plans. Such requests should not imply any commitment on the Commission's part to act on them, but should simply be a tool to assist it in co-ordinating its work and ordering its priorities in the preparation of the programme of work and priorities. When the programme of work and priorities was ready, ECWA should follow up the activities in question with the States concerned and should carry out a kind of evaluation of their implementation.

199. The Secretary of the Commission, replying to the comment of the representative of Iraq that the items dealt with were out of sequence, said that, while logic might require the order suggested, the terms of reference of the Technical Committee required it to consider its agenda to which, at the present session, had been added discussion of the provisional agenda before the ECWA ministerial meeting.

200. The representative of Qatar noted that the terms of reference of the Technical Committee included the preparation of reports relating to the annual sessions of the Commission and that that function had been approved at the previous session in order to lighten the burden of the ministers. The task of considering, studying and discussing all of the items included in the agenda and of preparing reports and recommendations in their final form for submission to the ministerial meeting had been entrusted to specialists.

201. The Chief of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit said that the Commission was anxious to devise appropriate mechanisms to ensure the greatest possible degree of active participation in the elaboration of the forthcoming programme. ECWA would have recourse to the assistance of member countries in finding the appropriate framework for well-considered action and participation in its formulation and implementation.

2. Follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission

Agenda item 7(b)
(E/ECWA/XII/6,* Add.1 and 2)

202. The Chairman requested that the discussion of resolution 124 (XI) be postponed until the ECWA ministerial meeting.

ECWA resolution 125(XI) on the general policy-making structure of the Commission

(E/ECWA/XII/6/Add.1)

203. The Secretary of the Commission reviewed the recommendation ECWA had adopted at its eleventh session calling on the Economic and Social Council to change the name of the Standing Committee for the Programme into the Technical Committee, provided that, in addition to the terms of reference assigned to it in accordance with ECWA resolution 114(IX), it would undertake to discuss the items of the provisional agenda of the annual session in preparation for the ECWA meeting at ministerial level. He added that the Economic and Social Council had adopted the recommendation at its second ordinary session in 1984. He reviewed in detail the timetable of the Technical Committee and the ministerial meetings. He asked the members of the Technical Committee to decide whether the proposed arrangements were useful in practical terms and would serve the aim for which the above-mentioned resolution had been adopted.

204. The representative of Iraq expressed the opinion that the period which had elapsed since the adoption of the resolution was a brief one. He proposed waiting a year or two to see whether or not the resolution required amendment.

205. The representative of Saudi Arabia seconded the proposal of the representative of Iraq.

* Issued in Arabic only.

ECWA resolution 126(XI) on staff and administrative questions

(E/ECWA/XII/6/Add.2)

206. The Chief of the ECWA Division of Administration made a brief review of the vacancies in ECWA since the last session. He said the number of Professional posts which were governed by geographical distribution amounted to 94, 63 of them being in the technical field and 31 in the administrative field, including computer services. The number of vacancies at the Professional level reached 27 at the end of March 1984, which was 41.5 per cent of the total Professional technical posts in the ECWA secretariat at the time. The vacancy rate for end-April 1985 was 30.1 per cent (or 19 posts) of the total number of technical Professional posts. If posts for which appointments had already been made were excluded then the vacancy rate in the technical area would be 23.8 per cent (or 15 posts). In the management and administrative areas there were currently only 2 vacancies out of 31 positions. Therefore, the overall vacancy rate for posts subject to geographical distribution was 18 per cent (or 17 posts) at the end of April 1985. In his review of the secretariat's efforts to fill the vacancies, he referred to the dispatch of a recruitment mission to Bahrain recently. It had held interviews with 21 candidates from the Gulf States. It was hoped that in consultation with the concerned Governments, similar missions would be sent to Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. As for recruiting Palestinian nationals, there was no problem about the question and the secretariat had actually recruited Palestinian nationals.

207. The representative of Saudi Arabia commended the ECWA practice of sending missions to recruit staff. He proposed informing the departments of technical co-operation in the member States of the qualifications of candidates for existing vacancies to facilitate matters for the secretariat.

208. The representative of Iraq asked for an explanation of the phrase "this will not necessitate the implementation of the special measures for the Economic Commission for Western Asia" contained in paragraph 7 of document E/ECWA/XII/6/Add.2.

209. The representative of the secretariat said the phrase meant that there was no need to resort to special measures for recruitment of staff in view of the reduction in the rate of vacancies. He said the secretariat had actually transcended that exigency and that the vacancy rate would be further reduced to fall within the reasonable normal range in the near future.

210. The Chief of the ECWA Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit said the resolution on filling vacancies had a positive impact even before it had gone to the United Nations in New York or to the Economic and Social Council as it helped to cover some of the main posts, particularly at the level of chiefs of divisions for the period of one year. He concluded that the extensive effort exerted by the ECWA secretariat to fill the vacancies had put an end to the exigency for which the resolution had been adopted.

211. The representative of Iraq said that session resolutions on the matter would serve no purpose if the Personnel Section of the secretariat had the right to revoke resolutions adopted by the Commission, by the Economic and Social Council and by the General Assembly.

212. The Chairman remarked that ECWA enjoyed a certain flexibility in dealing with the situation and that it could resort to exceptional measures in the event that the conventional measures failed to achieve the desired goals.

213. The representative of Iraq asked what were the implications of that flexibility and whether it meant suspending the effect of the resolution. Intensive Arab efforts had been made at United Nations Headquarters to have the resolution adopted and its retraction now might have negative consequences.

214. The representative of Egypt asked to what extent any United Nations body was entitled to annul the effect of a resolution adopted by a legislative organ. Only the body that had adopted the resolution had the authority to amend it. He was, in that connection, of the view that freedom of action should be left to the Commission.

215. The Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General, Office of Legal Affairs at United Nations Headquarters, commenting on the debate, said that the resolution of the General Assembly was not deemed to be void and had, in fact, been implemented. The secretariat, however, had not found it necessary to recruit personnel from overrepresented States. The resolution would, in future, be put into effect in the event that obstacles were encountered in regular recruiting procedures.

216. The representative of Qatar said that there was no incompatibility with regard to the implementation of the resolution. When it was adopted, there had been complaints relating to filling the quotas of certain countries which were underrepresented at the United Nations. In view of the circumstances of those countries, a resolution had been adopted increasing, on an exceptional basis, the lower limit and making use of local rather than non-local skills.

217. The representative of Iraq once again noted that the secretariat had no right to render the resolution void since it had emanated from a higher authority; the matter lay within the province of member States. The resolution should not, moreover, be held in abeyance for use in case of need.

218. The representative of Saudi Arabia associated himself with that statement.

219. The representative of Egypt proposed that a tripartite committee should be established to produce a draft resolution on the matter, taking note of the report contained in the document, expressing gratitude to the secretariat for its efforts to fill vacancies and reserving the Commission's right to implement the resolution.

220. The Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Legal Affairs said the United Nations would welcome any resolution reaffirming the resolution adopted by the General Assembly in that regard.

221. Following interventions by the representatives of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Egypt, agreement was reached on the following formulation and it was decided:

(a) To take note of the follow-up action on the resolutions of the Commission contained in document E/ECWA/XII/6/Add.2;

(b) To express gratitude to the ECWA secretariat and to the Office of Personnel Services at United Nations Headquarters for their efforts to facilitate implementation of General Assembly resolution 39/243 of 18 December 1984 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/81 of 27 July 1984;

(c) To reaffirm the effect of those resolutions and to reserve the right of the Commission to make use of the exceptional measures contained therein until such time as its needs were met.

Accordingly, the Technical Committee reaffirmed the continued effect of the two above-mentioned resolutions, deleting paragraph 7 of document E/ECWA/XII/6/Add.2.

ECWA resolution 130 (XI) on the strengthening of the ECWA programme in the area of increasing the participation of Arab women in development (see document E/ECWA/XII/6/Add.1)

222. The officer responsible for the women's programme introduced follow-up action on the resolution by indicating that ECWA had adopted it because of the increasing volume of activities included in the programme and the growing resources

allocated to it by the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, amounting to some \$400,000 a year. Programme management had been entrusted to one Professional officer. The other United Nations regional commissions had undertaken extensive activities in the field. The secretariat had therefore been prompted to establish a special unit for women's programmes operating within the Social Development and Population Division and it had increased the number of Professional posts available to the programme under the regular budget by one in order to facilitate the establishment of the unit and meet its requirements in accordance with the United Nations resolutions on the matter.

3. Follow-up action at the regional level of the United Nations world conferences and ECWA regional meetings

Agenda item 8
(E/ECWA/XII/7 and Add.1).

223. The Technical Committee took note of the efforts of the secretariat in that connection.

4. Financial status of the Commission's programme

Agenda item 9
(E/ECWA/XII/8, and Add.1, and
Add.1/Suppl.I and Corr.I, and Add.2)

224. The Acting Chief of the Division of Administration in the secretariat reviewed the principal features of the documents. He presented an analysis containing several indicators pertaining to the Commission's financial status, including the increased and almost total dependence on the regular budget of the United Nations, which covered 86 per cent of the total expenditure. He attributed that situation to the paucity of the available extrabudgetary resources and emphasized that, in view of the zero growth policy that was currently being applied in the United Nations system, total reliance on the regular budget was impeding the development of the programme. He said that the second indicator lay in the fact that the administration, general services and conferences programmes absorbed a large part of the financial allocations, amounting to almost 50 per cent of the total budget. He explained that one of the principal factors that had increased the volume of administrative expenditure was the maintenance of the permanent ECWA headquarters, which the Iraqi Government had kindly provided for the Organization, and the operation of the sophisticated equipment that it contained. He drew attention to the fact that the volume of that expenditure was expected to increase in the future. He also referred to the depletion of the limited resources available in the ECWA

financial contributions account, which had made it necessary to depend solely on the income from the interest on that account. In conclusion, he said that the fourth aspect of the financial status of the Commission's programmes lay in the limited amount of the financial resources allocated to training and developing the skills of ECWA staff. However, those allocations were increasing and would achieve a reasonable rate of growth with effect from the year 1986.

225. The representative of Iraq spoke highly of the support that was being provided by various organizations within the United Nations system and also by countries such as France and the Netherlands to cover the cost of a number of activities undertaken by ECWA.

5. Role of the joint ventures in promoting economic co-operation and integration in Western Asia

Agenda item 10
(E/ECWA/XII/9)

226. The representative of the secretariat introduced the study submitted, which he described as a preliminary step towards an analysis of the problems impeding production and trade within the region. He said that, in 1981, ECWA organized an expert group meeting on the subject of possible forms of economic co-operation in Western Asia in which joint ventures had been described as one way of expanding the production base in the region. He also said that the study was characterized by the fact that it was not confined to theoretical aspects but, on the contrary, had been prepared after visits to a number of countries in the region, during which officials had been interviewed in about 50 governmental departments and national and regional bodies. He said that the study contained alternatives, options and practical proposals for the achievement of the objectives established in regard to profitability, investment, management etc.

227. The representative of Egypt called for linkage between the introduction of joint regional ventures and the issues of technology and the activities of transnational corporations. ECWA should propose model schemes for the establishment of joint ventures, or the amalgamation of existing ventures where their activities were similar, in an endeavour to establish in the region gigantic companies with enormous capacities that would be able to acquire and develop a powerful and advanced technology.

228. The representative of Iraq called for the selection and distribution of joint ventures to be subject to basic criteria centred on the achievement of economic and social balance among the countries of the region as well as the criterion of the

absorptive capacity of the countries hosting the ventures. Although such ventures would be conducted in a regional perspective, they would have to take account of national strategies drawn up over a particular period of time. Otherwise, there would be an enormous waste of resources, a clash of objectives and a disruption of the desired balance. An example of such disruption was the great and unplanned expansion of the petrochemical industry in the area. He called for ECWA to conduct evaluative studies in the field so that the existing and the proposed joint ventures would achieve such balance within the framework of the desired economic co-operation and integration.

229. The representative of Saudi Arabia said that the subject of joint investments was a sensitive one. Such ventures should not be lightly passed over or affected by various considerations. He pointed to the possibility of ECWA and other United Nations specialized agencies, which were impartial to the fullest extent possible, undertaking the study and analysis of such ventures as well as the description of the problems involved and suitable proposals for solving them. He also called for preparing a directory on such ventures.

230. The representative of Iraq commended the ECWA report under consideration. It described the principal features of joint Arab ventures in comparison with their counterparts in the world at large and identified their positive and negative aspects. The establishment of most such ventures, however, had begun during the oil boom in the mid-1970s and they should be evaluated in the light of changes in the oil and other sectors subsequent to that time. He stressed the paramount importance of economic and trade criteria in the re-evaluation of such ventures.

231. The representative of the secretariat re-emphasized that the paper submitted was not theoretical since it had been prepared on the basis of a field study. He said that, although there might be a larger number of agricultural and industrial projects, the scale of priorities assigned to the projects in the study had been determined on the basis of the volume of investments made in those projects, as in the case of the Arab Insurance Group in which 3 billion dollars had been invested and the Arab Banking Organization whose capital amounted to 1 billion dollars. He explained that the report submitted to the Committee constituted an abstract of a larger and more detailed study.

6. Co-operation among developing countries

Agenda item 11 (E/ECWA/XII/10)

232. In introducing that item, the representative of the secretariat said that it was one of the permanent items on the

agenda of ECWA sessions. The document reviewed co-operation endeavours among developing countries on the basis of the resolutions of the General Assembly and other international bodies concerned and pursuant to the Caracas Programme of Action which, in the view of the Group of 77, had not been implemented to the extent required. He indicated that the meeting of executive secretaries of the United Nations regional economic commissions had devoted special attention to the promotion of that co-operation and had stressed the need for the allocation of new resources.

233. The representatives of Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Qatar referred to the actual economic co-operation between the region and other developing countries. They pointed to the importance the countries of the region attached to co-operation with developing countries and to the economic aid and agreements between their States and the developing countries in Asia and Africa.

7. Other business

Agenda item 9

234. The representative of Poland made a statement reviewing economic relations between his country and the region. He noted that Western Asia was chief among the regions with which Poland had economic relations.

8. Adoption of the Technical Committee's report

Agenda item 10

235. At the seventh meeting, held on 23 April 1985, the Committee adopted its report to the twelfth session of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (E/ECWA/CP/L.7) and authorized the rapporteur to incorporate therein any editorial changes that might be required.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE THIRD SESSION

A. Place and date of the session

236. The third session of the Technical Committee of the Economic Commission for Western Asia was held at the Commission's permanent headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, from 20 to 23 April 1985 for reviewing items of its provisional agenda and making recommendations in that regard to the twelfth session of the Commission. Its work covered seven meetings.

B. Attendance ^{1/}

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

238. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other organizations in the United Nations system attended the session as observers: International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

239. Representatives of the following governmental and non-governmental organizations also attended the session as observers: Arab Industrial Development Organization, Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, Arab Labour Organization, Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils, Federation of Arab Engineers, the World Federation of Trade Unions, Gulf Co-operation Council, Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, Arab Telecommunication Union and Arab Literacy Organization.

240. By virtue of article 4 of the Commission's terms of reference, the following States Members of the United Nations not members of the Economic Commission for Western Asia participated in a consultative capacity in the work of the third session of the Technical Committee: Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Korea, Federal Republic of Germany, France, India, Hungary, Poland, Central African Republic, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

^{1/} For the names of participants in the session, see E/ECWA/XII/CP/INF.1/Rev.3.

C. Credentials

241. Following their examination, it was decided to accept the credentials of all the representatives of the member States and the rest of the participating States and organizations.1/

D. Election of officers

242. The Technical Committee unanimously re-elected Mr. Ismail Al-Dulaymi, Advisor at the Iraqi Ministry of Planning, Chairman of the third session. The Committee also unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman Mr. Abdul Malik Othman Farash, Director General of the Technical Co-operation Department in Saudi Arabia and it elected as rapporteur Mr. Sayed El Masri, Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Director of Economic Affairs at the Foreign Ministry in Egypt.

E. Adoption of the agenda

243. The Technical Committee adopted at its first meeting on 20 April 1985 the provisional agenda included in document E/ECWA/XII/CP/1 as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Organization of work.
5. Invitation of States Members of the United Nations not members of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in the work of the third session of the Technical Committee.
6. Follow-up of the resolutions on the Standing Committee for the Programme:
 - (a) Resolution 1 (II) "Programme Planning and Co-ordination within the ECWA secretariat";
 - (b) Resolution 3 (II) "Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific".
7. Programme of work and priorities 1986-1987.
8. Discussion of the items on the provisional agenda of the ministerial twelfth session of the Commission.

9. Other business.
10. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

F. Organization of work

244. The Technical Committee approved at its first meeting held on 20 April 1985 for the organization of work the document concerning provisional organization of work (E/ECWA/XII/CP/2).

Annex I

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
AT ITS THIRD SESSION

The Technical Committee approved the following draft resolutions and recommended that they be adopted by the twelfth session.

Draft resolution 1

Programme of work and priorities
for the period 1986-1987

The Economic Commission for Western Asia.

Recalling Economic Commission for Western Asia resolutions 114(IX) of 12 May 1982 and 125 (XI) of 26 April 1984 which established its terms of reference,

Noting with appreciation the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987 proposed by the secretariat,

Having considered the observations and comments made by members of the Committee on the draft programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987,

1. Recommends that the Economic Commission for Western Asia should adopt the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987 and approve its report and the recommendations contained therein, as amended in the light of the observations made by the members;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary to submit a report to the Technical Committee at its fourth session on the implementation of the recommendations, particularly those regarding the priorities established, taking into consideration the observations made by representatives on the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987.

Draft resolution 2

Economic and social conditions of the Palestinian
Arab people under occupation

The Economic Commission for Western Asia.

Recalling its resolution 30(III) of 14 May 1976, in which it appealed to the Economic and Social Council for prompt action to take practical measures to ensure the improvement of the economic

and social conditions of the Palestinian Arab people in their homeland, its resolution 108(IX) of 11 May 1982 on assistance to the Palestine Liberation Organization, and its resolution 132(XI) of 16 April 1984 calling for special attention to be devoted to social and economic studies on the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

Recalling the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, where it is recommended that all States should "undertake measures to alleviate the economic and social burdens borne by the Palestinian people as a result of the continued Israeli occupation of their territories and that they should "consider contributing or increasing special contributions to the proposed budgets, programmes and projects of the relevant organs, funds and agencies of the United Nations system that have been requested to provide humanitarian, and social assistance to the Palestinian people",

1. Expresses gratitude to the Executive Secretary for the secretariat's efforts to conduct social and economic studies on the Palestinian Arab people;

2. Calls upon the Executive Secretary to ensure that all available data and information relating to the occupied Palestinian territories are included in all studies and statistical abstracts issued by the Commission at the regional level;

3. Calls upon the Executive Secretary to include in the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987 studies, in co-operation with the concerned international organizations, on economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories, such as may serve to strengthen the resistance of the Palestinian people in those areas, those studies to have particular reference to the demographic situation, and the Israeli settlement policy aimed at changing the demographic structure and obliterating the Palestinian character in the occupied Palestinian lands. The studies are also to cover the consolidation of the industrial sector, particularly the existing industries and the problems they are facing such as marketing, financing, manpower and raw materials;

4. Appeals to the international and Arab organizations concerned with the problems of social and economic development to assist the Executive Secretary in the preparation and execution of such specialized studies.

Draft resolution 3

Transport and Communications Decade
for Asia and the Pacific

The Economic Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling Standing Committee resolution 3 (II) of 26 April 1984, resolution 236 (XL) of 27 April 1984 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/78 of 27 July 1984 concerning the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 39/227 of 18 December 1984, by which the Assembly proclaimed a Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific during the period 1985-1994, and in particular paragraph 2 thereof requesting the Secretary-General to extend all necessary facilities and support to the Executive Secretaries of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Western Asia to mobilize the necessary international support for the successful implementation of the programmes for the Decade,

Taking further note of the report of the Executive Secretary on the programme of action for the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific which includes the region of Western Asia,^{1/}

Recognizing the importance of and the need for a co-ordinated interregional approach to transport and communications development in the ECWA region,

1. Invites member States to promote the Decade's activities and to participate and contribute in the implementation of the programme of action for achieving the objectives of the Decade in the ECWA region;

2. Urges relevant international and regional organizations particularly Arab organizations and funds, to contribute to the implementation of the Decade's programme of action;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary to co-ordinate and to follow up the Decade's activities undertaken in the Economic Commission for Western Asia and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific regions;

^{1/} E/ECWA/XII/CP/5/Add.1.

4. Calls upon the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution and on the first phase of the Decade (1985-1986) to the Economic Commission for Western Asia at its fourteenth session in 1987.

Draft resolution 4

The redesignation of the the Economic Commission for Western Asia.

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1818(LV) of 9 August 1973, by virtue of which the Economic Commission for Western Asia was established and its terms of reference laid down.

Recalling paragraph 1(f) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1818(LV).

Realizing the extreme importance of social development in the context of the overall development of the economies of members, and with the aim of achieving congruence between the subject-matter of the major activities undertaken in the work of the Commission in the economic and social domains and its present nomenclature as stipulated in Economic and Social Council resolution 1818(LV),

1. Recommends that the Economic and Social Council should designate the Economic Commission for Western Asia as the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its thirteenth session.

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE
 COMMITTEE AT ITS THIRD SESSION

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/ECWA/XII/CP/1	3	Provisional agenda
E/ECWA/XII/CP/1/Rev.1	3	Agenda
E/ECWA/XII/CP/1/Add.1	3	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ECWA/XII/CP/2	4	Proposed organization of work
E/ECWA/XII/CP/2/Rev.1	4	Organization of work
E/ECWA/XII/CP/3 and Rev.1 to 3	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 activities of the third session of the Technical Committee Note by the Executive Secretary
E/ECWA/XII/CP/4 E/ECWA/XII/CP/4/Corr.1	6(a)	Follow-up on the resolutions of the Standing Committee for the Programme: (a) resolution 1(II), "Programme planning and co-ordination within the ECWA secretariat" Note by the Executive Secretary
E/ECWA/XII/CP/5 E/ECWA/XII/CP/5/Add.1	6(b)	Follow-up on the resolutions of the Standing Committee for the Programme:

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
		(b) resolution 3(II), "Transport and Commun- ications Decade for Asia and the Pacific (1985- 1994)"
E/ECWA/XII/CP/6 E/ECWA/XII/CP/6/Add.1 E/ECWA/XII/CP/6/Add.1/ Corr.1	7	Programme of work and priorities 1986-1987 Note by the Executive Secretary
E/ECWA/XII/CP/L.7	10	Draft report of the Technical Committee on the work of its third session
E/ECWA/XII/CP/7		Report of the Technical Committee on the work of its third session
E/ECWA/XII/CP/INF.1 Rev.1 and 2		Provisional list of participants
E/ECWA/XII/CP/INF.1/Rev.3		List of participants
E/ECWA/XII/CP/INF.2		Provisional list of documents
E/ECWA/XII/CP/INF.2./Rev.1		List of documents