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AC/127-D/33

COMMITTEE OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Note by the Acting Secretary

The attached paper has been prepared by the International Staff at the request of the Committee of Economic Advisers in order to assist the Committee in its discussion of the question brought up by the United States' Delegation in their note AC/127-N/11.

2. This paper attempts to summarise the present situation in the ECE as far as it is relevant to the question brought up by the United States' Delegation. It does not propose any course of action with regard to the substance of the question.

(Signed) A.W. LUKENS

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

I. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Economic Commission for Europe was set up in 1947 as a regional Economic Commission of the United Nations under the Economic and Social Council. According to its terms of reference, the ECE shall:

- "(a) initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic reconstruction of Europe, for raising the level of European economic activity, and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the European countries both among themselves and with other countries of the world;
- (b) make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within member countries of the Commission and within Europe generally as the Commission deems appropriate;
- (c) undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate".⁽¹⁾

II. MEMBERSHIP

2. Members of the ECE are the European members of the United Nations, i.e. Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian SSR, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland⁽²⁾, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukrainian SSR, the United Kingdom, the USSR, and Yugoslavia. The United States is also a member of the Commission. In addition, the Federal Republic of Germany became a member on 21st February, 1956.

III. ATTENDANCE BY NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES AND SPECIALISED AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

3. Several non-European countries participate in the work of the ECE in a consultative capacity concerning matters of special interest to them. At the last meeting of the ECE, the following countries, members of the United Nations, were present in this capacity, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the terms of reference (Annex I): Argentina, Canada, Cuba, India, Israel, Japan, Mexico, the United Arab Republic and Uruguay. According to paragraph 8 of the terms of reference, the Commission may also admit in a consultative capacity European nations not members of the United Nations. Switzerland participates in the work of the ECE in this consultative capacity. It will be recalled that the

- (1) Other relevant paragraphs of the terms of reference of the ECE are reproduced in Annex I. For full text, see, for example, E/ECE/321, Annex II.
- (2) Iceland does not normally participate in meetings of the ECE.

possibility of the Eastern zone of Germany being admitted in this capacity has been discussed in the Council⁽¹⁾ and in the Committee of Political Advisers⁽²⁾, and that a proposal to this effect was voted down at a recent meeting of the ECE⁽³⁾. Representatives from Eastern Germany, however, participate in certain meetings of the Commission's subsidiary organs, in accordance with Article 10 of the terms of reference.

4. A number of specialised United Nations agencies also participate in the work of the ECE, in accordance with paragraph 12 of the terms of reference. The following specialised agencies attended the last meeting of the ECE: the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labour Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the World Health Organization.

IV. ATTENDANCE BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

5. Paragraph 13 of the terms of reference provides for arrangements to be made for consultation with non-governmental organizations which have been granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council. At the last meeting of the ECE, the following non-governmental organizations were present:

Category A:⁽⁴⁾

- International Co-operative Alliance
- International Federation of Free Trade Unions
- International Organization of Employers
- International Federation of Christian Trade Unions
- World Federation of Trade Unions
- World Veterans' Federation

Category B:⁽⁴⁾

- Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
- International Statistical Institute
- International Union of Official Travel Organizations
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

(1) See C-M(57)66.

(2) See AC/119-WP/37.

(3) See AC/127-D/19, page 3, I.

(4) In establishing relationship with non-governmental organizations, the Economic and Social Council distinguishes between organizations which take an interest in the major part of the Council's activities (Category A), those which are specially interested in certain aspects of the Council's activities (Category B), and, finally, organizations placed on the register of the Economic and Social Council (Category C), i.e. those that can contribute to the work of the Council. These organizations are either placed on the register by the Council itself or by the Secretary General of the United Nations, or have this status by virtue of the fact that they have consultative status or similar relationship with one or more of the specialised agencies.

V. INTER-SECRETARIAT WORKING RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

6. The Annual Report of the ECE⁽¹⁾, covering the period 16th May 1957 to 24th April 1958, outlines the activity of the Secretariat in maintaining working relations with intergovernmental organizations. The ECE Secretariat has maintained such informal working relations with the staff of the OEEC on agriculture, coal, electric power, gas, general energy questions, steel, timber and trade, as well as general economic research and statistical matters. The Secretariat continued its informal contacts with the European Productivity Agency on matters of common concern. The existing informal working relations were further developed with the Secretariat of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) with respect of agriculture, electric power, trade and payments. The informal exchange of information with the Secretariat of the Council of Europe was continued, and similar inter-secretariat relations with the staff of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community were carried on along established lines. In the transport field, contacts were maintained with the Secretariat of the Danube Commission, located in Budapest, and with the European Conference of Ministers of Transport and its officials. Working relations were also established with the staff of the Organization for the Co-operation of Railway Administrations, located in Warsaw.

7. Several other intergovernmental organizations, such as the Central Commission on the Navigation of the Rhine, the Central Office for International Railway Transport, the Customs Co-operation Council, the International Institute of Refrigeration, and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, continued their association with the ECE's work on a number of questions. Contacts at the secretariat level with the Interim Commission for the International Trade Organization were continued.

VI. ATTENDANCE BY INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

8. According to paragraph 12 of the terms of reference, the Commission may invite representatives of any intergovernmental organizations to participate in a consultative capacity in its consideration of any matter of particular concern to that agency or organization.

9. The note by the United States Delegation, circulated as AC/127-M/11, and the discussion at the last meeting of the Committee of Economic Advisers, brought to the attention of the Committee the fact that the Executive Secretary of the ECE (and not the Commission) has invited a number of Eastern and Western

(1) See E/ECE/321, paragraphs 210 to 212. This document was unanimously adopted by the Economic Commission for Europe on 24th April, 1958.

intergovernmental organizations to participate in the work of the ECE, with official status as observers, by which may be meant "in a consultative capacity" as defined in paragraph 12 of the terms of reference. Invitations have been sent to the OEEC, the European Coal and Steel Community, and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) (from the West) and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the Danube Commission⁽¹⁾ and the Organization for the Co-operation of Railway Administrations (from the East). The Secretariat has no information about the last-named organization. Information about ECMT, CEMA and the Danube Commission is given in Annex III.

10. It is the view of the United States Delegation, as expressed in AC/127-N/11 and at the last meeting of the Committee, that the Executive Secretary of the ECE, in inviting these organizations, has exceeded his authority, and that NATO members should ask their Geneva representatives to make representations in the Secretariat in order that the final decision on the admittance of these organizations to the work of the ECE should be taken at the next meeting of the Commission itself. Furthermore, the US Delegation has raised the question of whether the East European organizations that have been invited by the Secretariat qualify for the status which they have been invited to assume.

VII. EAST-WEST CONTACTS THROUGH ECE

11. The role of the Secretariat of the ECE, headed by the Executive Secretary - at present Mr. S. Tuomioja - is laid down in the Rules of Procedure of the Commission - Rules 18 to 22 inclusive (see Annex II).

12. The Secretariat of the ECE has played an aggressive role in undertaking various study projects and programmes, and some of their work has attracted considerable attention, sometimes favourable and sometimes unfavourable.

13. Since the death of Stalin, when the Russians changed their attitude towards the work of the ECE, this Organization has, in fact, been an important forum for discussions between the East and West on economic co-operation. The Eastern delegations have made use of the machinery of the ECE to further their own political aims, and have succeeded to some extent in dominating the work of the Commission. However, a number of useful contacts of a technical nature have been made through the various committees and working groups, and some practical results have been achieved under ECE auspices. Certain NATO member countries have repeatedly stated that they consider these activities desirable. It may also be recalled that the United States Delegation recently put forward a proposal in the Committee of Economic Advisers, aimed at obtaining through the ECE more statistical data from Eastern Europe.⁽²⁾

(1) A representative of the Danube Committee was present at a recent meeting of a Working Group of the ECE Inland Transport Committee.

(2) See AC/127-D/28; AC/127-D/30 and Corrigendum; C-M(58)94 and C-R(58)41.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

14. Since the question raised by the United States Delegation is mainly political, any conclusions about this matter should, in view of its political implications, be forwarded to the Committee of Political Advisers before being sent to the Council.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE
OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

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8. The Commission may admit in a consultative capacity European nations not members of the United Nations, and shall determine the conditions in which they may participate in its work, including the question of voting rights in the subsidiary bodies of the Commission.
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10. The Commission may consult with the representatives of the respective Allied Control Authorities of the occupied territories, and be consulted by them for the purpose of mutual information and advice on matters concerning the economies of these territories in relation to the rest of the European economy.

11. The Commission shall invite any member of the United Nations not a member of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in its consideration of any matter of particular concern to that non-member.

12. The Commission shall invite representatives of specialised agencies and may invite representatives of any inter-governmental organizations to participate in a consultative capacity in its consideration of any matter of particular concern to that agency or organization, following the practices of the Economic and Social Council.

13. The Commission shall make arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which have been granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with the principles approved by the Council for this purpose and contained in Council resolution 288(X), parts I and II.
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15. The Commission shall adopt its own rules of procedure, including the method of selecting its Chairman.

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RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

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Chapter V: SECRETARIAT

Rule 18: The Executive Secretary shall act in that capacity at all meetings of the Commission and of its sub-commissions, other subsidiary bodies and committees. He may appoint another member of the staff to take his place at any meeting.

Rule 19: The Executive Secretary or his representative may at any meeting make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 20: The Executive Secretary shall direct the staff provided by the Secretary General and required by the Commission, its sub-commissions, any other subsidiary bodies and committees.

Rule 21: The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for the necessary arrangements being made for meetings.

Rule 22: The Executive Secretary in carrying out his functions shall act on behalf of the Secretary General.
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Chapter XI: RELATIONS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Rule 47: Non-governmental organizations in Categories A, B and C may designate authorised representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Commission. Non-governmental organizations in category A may circulate to the members of the Commission written statements and suggestions on matters within their competence. Non-governmental organizations in categories B and C may submit such statements and suggestions to the Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary will prepare and distribute at each session of the Commission a list of such communications received, briefly indicating the substance of each of them. On the request of any member of the Commission the Executive Secretary will reproduce in full and distribute any such communication.

Rule 48: The Commission at its discretion may consult with non-governmental organizations in categories A, B and C on matters in which the Commission regards these organizations as having special competence or knowledge. Such consultations may be arranged on the invitation of the Commission or on the request of the organization. In the case of non-governmental organizations in category A, consultations should normally be held with the Commission itself. In the case of non-governmental organizations in categories B & C consultations might be effected either directly or through ad hoc committees.

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EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT

Established 1953 in Brussels.

Members: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States (as observer), and Yugoslavia.

Purpose: To take all measures aimed at the best utilisation and most rational development of European inland transport; to co-ordinate and promote the work of international organizations dealing with European inland transport, taking into account the activities of supra-national authorities in this field.

COUNCIL FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE⁽¹⁾

Established January 1949 in Moscow.

Members: Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the Eastern Zone of Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and the USSR. Other European countries sharing the principles of the Council and wishing economic co-operation with member countries can become members. Representatives of North Vietnam, China, North Korea and Outer Mongolia attend meetings of this Organization as observers.

Purpose: Exchange of economic experience among member countries; technical mutual aid; mutual assistance regarding raw materials, foodstuffs, machines, etc.

THE DANUBE COMMISSION

Established 1948 in Belgrade. (This Organization should not be confused with the European Danube Commission established in Paris in 1856).

Members: Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, the USSR and Yugoslavia.

Purpose: Establishment of general plans for work of interest to navigation; carrying out all work necessary to assure and improve conditions of navigation where the member country concerned is unable to carry out the work

(1) See AC/89-WP/31.

itself; consultations and recommendations with regard to hydro-electric work; exchange of information among river administrations; consultation and recommendations of a technical nature related to navigation on the river and on questions of customs control, sanitation control, etc.

Source: Yearbook of International Organizations; Summary of World Broadcasts, No. 932, 23rd May, 1958, Part I, page 26.