

The sixth session of the General Conference of UNESCO was held at the Agency's headquarters in Paris from June 18 to July 11, 1951. Fifty-nine member countries took part in the Conference and eight non-member states sent observers. (The Soviet Union is not a member of UNESCO; no delegations were sent by Czechoslovakia, Hungary or Poland, which are members.) The session decided on UNESCO's programme for 1952, within the limits of a budget of \$8,718,000. The more significant decisions of the Conference are described in the following paragraphs.

The Conference considered that too much of the energies of the Secretariat and too much of the money of the Organization were being spent in its annual sessions. Accordingly, on the initiative of the United States, it was decided at the 1951 Conference to hold general sessions at two-year intervals. As this change will increase the responsibilities of the continuing Executive Board of UNESCO, the United Kingdom, with Canada's support, proposed that the Executive Board should be changed from a committee of individuals to a committee of government representatives. At present, the Executive Board is made up of 18 individuals, competent in the arts, humanities and sciences, elected by the delegates to the General Conference from among their own numbers. Its members sit, however, as representatives of the General Conference and not as representatives of their home governments. The Conference rejected the United Kingdom proposal, keeping the Executive Board in its present form.

The sixth session admitted five states to membership in UNESCO: Japan, the German Federal Republic (Western Germany), Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam. All have since deposited their instruments of acceptance of the constitution of UNESCO, bringing the total membership of the Organization to 65. Applications for membership from Spain, Nepal and the Kingdom of Libya will be considered at the 1952 General Conference. After some debate, the sixth session agreed that non-self-governing territories might be admitted as associate members, upon application by the states responsible for them, and that they might participate without vote in all the deliberations of the General Conference. As of March 1952, no applications on behalf of dependent territories had been received by the Director-General.

To meet the challenge of illiteracy among half the world's population, the Conference adopted a 12-year plan of fundamental education in under-developed areas. Along with the basic skills of reading and writing, the programme is designed to spread a knowledge of the fundamentals of citizenship, health and agriculture. The instruction is based upon a specific problem facing the people of each area, whether disease in Bombay or soil erosion in Colombia, and makes use of every available technique — posters, films, study groups and primers in the local language. Fundamental education in any area is naturally the responsibility of the government concerned. UNESCO acts as the co-ordinating body, exchanging information, providing education materials, and arranging for the services of experts. At the request of UNESCO, for example, educators from Canada have assisted projects in India, Pakistan, Thailand and the Middle East during the past year. In 1951 UNESCO