

UNESCO'S PROGRAMME

Education

In primary and secondary education, the experience gained since 1956 in the operation of the Major Project for Latin America together with the findings of regional meetings held recently in Asia (Karachi), Africa (Addis Ababa) and the Middle East (Beirut) provided a sound basis for the discussions. It revealed the same essential needs and the same priorities for international action. Unesco's role will thus be concerned primarily with planning the development of national educational systems so that they are realistically and efficiently administered; inter-relating educational expansion with the overall plans for the economic and social development of each country, and helping preserve the specific cultural and moral values of each people. At the same time, it was visualized that Unesco's aid will best be administered on a regional rather than on a national basis, so as not to interfere with the specific role of the national authorities. The conference endorsed this pattern of action which lays stress on the regional training of teachers.

It was recognized also that in the programme for the next two years, special priority should be assigned to Africa and its pressing needs, especially in secondary education. (Compared to the world percentage of 20 per cent secondary school students, the African percentage is 6 per cent.) The United States delegation gave expression to a feeling widespread among delegations in proposing, at the opening of the session, an expenditure of \$1 million for special educational assistance to Africa, over and above the budget submitted by the Director-General which already provided a substantial measure of assistance. In addition, a draft resolution submitted later by Yugoslavia quickly won extraordinary support and was readily sponsored by thirteen states. It approved an emergency voluntary programme to provide additional funds in the amount of \$2.2 million to be administered by Unesco in an attempt to meet the most pressing educational needs of Africa. Priorities for the use of funds are in the following order: the emergency building of schools, the purchase of audio-visual aids, the hiring of professors abroad at the secondary and technical school level, and a survey of Africa's educational needs. A pledge by the United States delegation of \$1 million toward that fund was followed instantly by further pledges from other members of financial contributions, scholarships, school equipment and printing of textbooks. In the event, more than half of the target had already been reached when the session ended. This demonstration of international solidarity created a deep impression on the new African members who had already expressed their heartfelt appreciation of the increased resources allotted to their needs under Unesco's regular budget. A third contribution by the conference was a blueprint of Africa's educational priorities, a very useful document which resulted from the deliberations of a large working party under the chairmanship of the delegate of Morocco.

The Director-General's proposals for the development of the educational system in the Congo within the framework of the Civilian Operations of the United Nations brought an enthusiastic response from the majority of delegations. Under this programme Unesco will bear the headquarters costs while the United Nations from its special Congo Fund will defray local expenses. In addition to approving plans for the future, the conference endorsed and commended the speedy