

# The Colombo Plan Consultative Committee

FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE, MELBOURNE

THE ANNUAL MEETING of representatives of Colombo Plan governments to review progress and examine the tasks ahead was held in Melbourne from November 12 to 16, 1962. The leader of the Canadian delegation at this fourteenth meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia was Mr. H. O. Moran, Director-General of the External Aid Office. The 21 members of the Colombo Plan were represented at the meeting, which was also attended by observers from the Republic of Korea and the Kingdom of Bhutan; at the conclusion of the meeting, the Consultative Committee agreed to welcome these two countries as members of the Colombo Plan.

## Annual Report

The eleventh annual report of the Consultative Committee noted that the Colombo Plan had continued since 1951 to help the economic development of its members through the exchange of ideas and experience, in addition to the provision of many forms of capital and technical assistance. The report noted that the peoples of South and Southeast Asia shared the rising expectations of all humanity for economic progress and social welfare. The very rapid increase in population made economic development more urgent and, in some countries, more difficult. Much progress had been made but still more remained to be done before decent standards of living prevailed in the region.

The Committee reviewed economic developments during the past year, during which the rate of economic growth in the region had varied considerably from country to country. On a *per capita* basis, changes in real gross national product had ranged from increases up to 6 per cent to falls of 2 per cent. Agricultural production had increased substantially and industrial production had also continued to rise. Another encouraging feature had been the continued increase in resources devoted to development. External economic assistance had continued to supplement significantly the resources available within the area. Since the inception of the Colombo Plan, donor countries have provided almost \$12 billion, including the supply of equipment, the provision of agricultural commodities, technical assistance, loans and grants. In 1961-62 the value of such aid was about \$1,815 million.

## Need of Sustained Expansion

The meeting noted that one of the major conditions for the progress of the less-developed countries — the maintenance in the advanced countries of sustained expansion and high levels of employment — had usually been fulfilled