

During the present century, the tremendous development of transport and communications (sea and air navigation, radiotelegraphy and, more recently, meteorological and communications satellites) and the increased requirements of modern economic activity have given rise to a large number of technical problems, as well as unprecedented opportunities for improvement. A universal appreciation of the importance of meteorology, coupled with the surprising development of technology, has enabled this relatively young science to make considerable progress. These new developments showed that reorganization at an international level was necessary in view of the increased interest in meteorology.

Consequently, the Conference of Directors of the National Meteorological Services, which met at Washington in 1947 under the auspices of the International Meteorological Organization, adopted the World Meteorological Convention establishing a new organization founded on an agreement between governments. Just prior to this Conference, Canada had played host to the sessions of the Technical Commissions of the IMO, which met in Toronto in the summer of 1947.

The Convention adopted at Washington was ratified by a large number of states, and in 1951 the new World Meteorological Organization became active, the IMO having been dissolved. Furthermore, the General Assembly of the United Nations approved, in December 1951, the agreement between the United Nations and the World Meteorological Organization. The latter was thus recognized by the United Nations as a Specialized Agency.

The objectives of the WMO are:

- (1) to facilitate international co-operation in the establishment of networks of stations and centers to provide meteorological services and observations;
- (2) to promote the establishment and maintenance of systems for rapid exchange of meteorological information;
- (3) to promote standardisation of meteorological observations and ensure the uniform publication of observations and statistics;
- (4) to further the application of meteorology to aviation, shipping, agriculture, and other human activities;
- (5) to encourage research and training in meteorology.

Structure and Activities

The administrative and technical machinery of the WMO consists of:

- (1) A World Meteorological Congress in which 131 member countries and territories are represented by the heads of their meteorological services. It meets once every