

## II ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL

### Survey of the Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) met twice in New York in regular sessions during the period under review.<sup>1</sup> The fourteenth session held from May 20 to August 1, 1952, was the longest on record. It was marked by much less acrimony and fewer exchanges of bitter propaganda between the Communist bloc and other countries than had been the case heretofore at the Santiago and Geneva sessions. If, however, the delegations of the Soviet bloc did not press their case too strongly and a greater degree of harmony prevailed between representatives of developed and under-developed countries, this improvement still fell short in degree from that which would be required for a truly harmonious, efficient and effectively working Council.

During the debates which ensued, the Council gave consideration to the major problems traditionally within its responsibility, reviewed the work accomplished by its Specialized Agencies and its functional commissions and requested further studies on those questions which were still not ripe for final decision. Thus, in the field of economic development of under-developed countries the Council recommended to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development that it carry out a further examination of its earlier proposal to establish an international finance corporation. It also suggested for the benefit of governments such steps as would, in under-developed countries, encourage foreign investments, permit a programme of increased industrialization, and make available on a wider basis existing scientific and technological knowledge. Elsewhere in the consideration of its economic agenda, the Council set a target of \$25 million for 1953 contributions by governments to the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and debated at length measures for securing world economic stability, full employment and for countering recessions.

On the social side, the Council considered a report on the World Social Situation prepared by the Secretariat and the Specialized Agencies concerned and discussed, on the recommendation of the General Assembly, the preparation of a programme of practical action for the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies in the social field. It also adopted the suggestion of the Human Rights Commission that its work on the two draft covenants should if possible be completed in 1953, confirmed the discontinuance of the Sub-Commission on Freedom of Information and of the Press, and agreed to make Spanish the third working language of the Council.

These accomplishments were useful, though hardly spectacular. Indeed, a number of delegations considered that the Council, seemingly content with arrangements for preparatory activities, had postponed definite action to the future. But the slowness of progress towards the full realization of the economic and humanitarian objectives of

<sup>1</sup>See *Canada and the United Nations 1951-52*, pp. 43-45 for an account of the preceding period.