

Statistical Commission

The sixth session of the Statistical Commission met at Lake Success from May 7 to May 18, 1951. Mr. Herbert Marshall, Dominion Statistician, served on the Commission as a Canadian expert. The agenda of the meeting was comprehensive. It included items of first importance to which, however, final consideration could not be given. Studies and reports on these items were critically examined by the Commission with a view to guiding the statistical office of the United Nations in its task of further exploring and preparing final reports for discussion at a subsequent session. Some of the important items were definitions for trade statistics, principles for a vital statistics system, wholesale price statistics, and basic industrial statistics.

The Commission adopted several resolutions entrusting the Secretary-General of the United Nations with responsibilities in the fields of international trade statistics, transport statistics, vital statistics, price statistics, basic industrial statistics, capital formation statistics, distribution statistics and the improvement of national statistics, particularly in under-developed countries.

The Commission recommended several resolutions to the Economic and Social Council. One of these invited the Secretary-General to prepare, with the concurrence of each country concerned, a summary of the official definitions made by governments themselves of their customs areas. It further requested members of the United Nations to use these definitions in compiling their "trade-by-country" statistics. Another resolution asked the Council to take note that the Statistical Commission had endorsed a resolution on criminal statistics adopted by the Social Commission. The Statistical Commission declared its willingness to assist in the task which the Social Commission had undertaken.

The Commission established a system of priorities for its work programme and for the functions performed by the United Nations in statistical matters.

Population Commission

The sixth session of the Population Commission was held at Lake Success from April 23 to May 4, 1951. Canada was not a member of this Commission during 1951 and 1952, although it had been a member from 1947 to 1949.

The Commission devoted most of its time to reviewing the work done by the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat. It made several recommendations to the Secretary-General, entrusting him with responsibilities such as the completion of studies already begun and the undertaking of new studies. These concerned: the relationship between population trends and economic and social factors; the demographic aspects of migration; the demographic aspects of the problems of retired and aged persons; the convening of regional seminars and the arrangement of training courses on population problems; mortality rates; the recent trends of the birth rate; the question of selecting some under-developed