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## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL

### Survey of the Economic and Social Council

The Charter of the United Nations recognizes the intimate connection which exists between world peace and security on the one hand and economic well-being and social stability on the other. Under Article 55 member states have undertaken to promote higher standards of living and conditions of economic and social progress "with a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations . . ."

When the Charter was drafted it was realized that to achieve these goals on a world-wide basis international action would be necessary. The years between the two World Wars had brought out the increasing complexity of economic inter-relations and the need for international machinery to deal with them. In addition, problems of reconstruction and stabilization had to be faced at the close of the second World War and it was believed that these needs and problems could be met by technical bodies operating within specific fields. Some agencies, for example the Universal Postal Union and the International Labour Organization, were already in existence and had proved their worth in peace time. Others, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund, had been created during the War in anticipation of postwar requirements. There was, however, need for a body with a status comparable in some respects to that of the Security Council, which would be responsible to the General Assembly for the whole field of economic and social policy and for the co-ordination of the work of Specialized Agencies. In response to this need the Economic and Social Council was established under Chapter X of the Charter and was entrusted with those responsibilities.

Specifically the Council is charged with making or initiating studies and reports and making recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters. It promotes respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedom for all. It may call international conferences and prepare draft conventions for submission to the General Assembly on matters within its competence. It co-ordinates the activities of the Specialized Agencies by means of consultation with them, and consults with non-governmental organizations concerned on matters of common interest. It makes an annual report to the General Assembly.

The Council is composed of eighteen members elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms. One third of its membership is renewable each year. Members are chosen with regard both to their contribution to the work of the Council in the economic, social and humanitarian fields and to balanced geographical distribution. The five permanent members of the Security Council are, by convention, always re-elected. In 1958 Canada completed its third term on the Council.