

In the field of communicable diseases emphasis was placed on the creation or strengthening of epidemiological services with a strong central unit, and of relevant public health laboratory and statistical services. Progress was made toward the eradication of smallpox in South-East Asia, where pilot programmes were begun. Work continued in the field of environmental sanitation, emphasizing the training of sanitary engineers and sanitarians and on providing safe water supply and waste disposal. WHO continues to regard its fellowship programme as one of the most efficient tools for training national health personnel. From December 1, 1959 to August 31, 1960 WHO awarded 1006 fellowships to applicants from 122 countries.

Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization

The Convention for an Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization was drawn up at the United Nations Maritime Conference by 35 nations and opened for signature on March 6, 1948, at Geneva. Canada was the first country to ratify the Convention, the instrument of acceptance being deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on October 15, 1948. IMCO officially came into being when, on March 17, 1958, the Convention was ratified by Japan, thus bringing to the requisite 21 the number of states which had ratified the Convention. The requirement that at least seven of these states should have not less than one million gross tons of shipping each had also been met by this date, with the result that IMCO became the twelfth Specialized Agency of the United Nations. The first session of the IMCO Council was held in London, the headquarters of the Organization, from January 6 to 19, 1959.

Under the terms of the Convention, this "consultative and advisory agency" will promote co-operation in technical matters, encourage adoption of the highest standards of safety and navigation, discourage discriminatory action or unnecessary restrictions by governments affecting international shipping, consider matters concerning unfair restrictive practices by shipping concerns, provide for the exchange of information and take up any other shipping matters referred to it by any organ of the United Nations.

IMCO has as its policy-making body an Assembly of all members which meets every two years. Between sessions of the Assembly, a Council performs all functions of the Organization except that of recommending to members the adoption of maritime safety regulations. The Council is composed of sixteen members, of which eight represent countries having an interest in providing international shipping services, and eight (including Canada) at present represent countries having an interest in international seaborne trade.

The IMCO Convention also provides for a Maritime Safety Committee consisting of fourteen members on which Canada is represented. This Committee deals with such matters as aids to navigation, rules for preventing collision, construction and equipment of vessels, and the handling of dangerous cargoes.