

Traditionally, the plenary session provides the forum for the Director-General's report to the Conference and the ensuing general debate, in which a large number of representatives from member states and affiliated organizations express their views on UNESCO's policies and activities. In addition, it is the task of the plenary session to elect the Conference officers and new members of the Executive Board and to receive reports on other matters from various subsidiary bodies. At the thirteenth General Conference, a new technique was introduced whereby agenda items that had political overtones that might give rise to controversy were referred directly to the plenary session. This practice was initiated in the hope that the subsidiary bodies would be free to concentrate on the substantive aspects of their work. On the whole, it proved to be a useful arrangement, though other bodies, such as the Programme Commission and the Legal Committee, were inevitably concerned to some extent with questions of a political character.

Professor N. M. Sissakian of the U.S.S.R., the only candidate proposed to the Conference, was elected on October 21 by acclamation.

UNESCO Programmes

The Programme Commission, charged with the planning and co-ordination of UNESCO's programmes for 1965-66, dealt with education, natural sciences, social sciences, human sciences and cultural activities, media and international exchanges in that order.

Education

Education continues to have the first priority among UNESCO's activities. A greatly expanded programme has been made possible for the forthcoming biennium by increased resources from the Special Fund and from the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, and this expansion can be expected to increase even further in the future. The Conference noted with satisfaction that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Development Association, and the Inter-American Development Bank were now providing long-term loans for secondary and technical education and participating in UNESCO's programme for educational planning.

The importance being attached to educational activities in UNESCO and their continued growth are best demonstrated perhaps by an examination of the financing involved. In the period 1963-1964, a total of \$16.6 million was made available for UNESCO's educational projects. Of this, \$9.9 million came from the regular budget and \$6.7 million from extra-budgetary resources. For the 1965-1966 period, the total funds available to UNESCO for educational work will amount to \$27.8 million. This is made up of \$11.3 million from the regular budget (an increase of 13 per cent) and \$16.5 million from extra-budgetary sources (an increase of 60 per cent).

In the area of educational planning and administration, where specialists are particularly scarce, UNESCO will continue its efforts to promote research and