

Executive Committee

Second Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE EIGHTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on September 1st 1948 at 10 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: Hon. L.D. WILGRESS (Canada)

Relations of the International Trade Organization with other
Intergovernmental Organizations. (ICITO/EC.2/2/Add.5)

(Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda).

The CHAIRMAN said that there remained to be considered the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, but that no specific decision regarding the Organization would be necessary in view of the previous decisions of the Executive Committee regarding other Inter-Governmental Organizations, whereby the Executive Secretary had been asked to maintain contacts at the Secretariat level.

The Executive Committee agreed to the Chairman's proposal.

Relations with non-governmental Organizations. (ICITO/EC.2/11)
and (Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda).

The CHAIRMAN gave a brief summary of the paper before the Committee, which had been drawn up in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article 87 of the Havana Charter. The paper prepared by the Secretariat outlined the policy of the Economic and Social Council and of other specialized agencies in this matter and the conclusions and recommendations of the Executive Secretary for consideration

by the Executive Committee. He then called upon the Executive Secretary to supplement the information contained in this paper.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY said that he would like to supplement the somewhat inadequate description which was given in document ICITO/EC.2/11 of the practical arrangements which he would suggest for putting into effect the recommendations which he had made regarding relations with non-governmental organizations.

1. The Conference should adopt a list of "consultants" chosen preferably from the Economic and Social Council list of non-governmental organizations with consultative status, on the recommendations of the Director-General with the approval of the Executive Board.
2. The non-governmental organizations thus listed by the conference should receive invitations to send observers to the Annual Conference of the Organization. They should also be provided with the Conference documentations. These organizations should also have the right to propose items for the Conference agenda; items so proposed would be considered by the Executive Board and the Board should hear the representative of a non-governmental organization which had proposed an item.
3. As regards the activities of the Organization other than the Annual Conference, where specific projects were entrusted to the Director-General or to the subsidiary organs of the Organization there should be consultation with any listed non-governmental organization competent in the field of such project. In the first instance such consultations should be undertaken by the Director-General in preparing the

documentation of the subsidiary organ of the Organization concerned. The committee or commission concerned could also hear representatives of non-governmental organizations which had a contribution to make to the matter under enquiry.

4. On more general matters the Director-General should have authority to set up, if he thought fit, an advisory committee of representatives of the non-governmental organizations. If such an advisory committee were established it might most conveniently meet just before the Annual Conference.

5. Documentation - The listed non-governmental organizations should receive copies of all unrestricted documents of the Organization. Documents submitted to the Organization by listed non-governmental organizations should be distributed at the discretion of the Director-General, one of whose functions it would be to see that appropriate documentation is available to the Conference. The Director-General would also circulate a list of all communications received from listed non-governmental organizations, and any document so listed should receive full distribution at the request of any member government.

6. The Director-General should refer to the Executive Board any difference of view between himself and any listed non-governmental organizations regarding the implementation of these arrangements.

7. These arrangements should be subject to review from time to time, and in such review the views of the non-governmental organizations should be given full consideration.

Dr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia) said that in general he was in agreement with the Executive Secretary. In view of the special character of some of the functions of the ITO,

the procedure followed by other specialized agencies would not be appropriate. Highly confidential matters such as differences between countries would come up and the question of such relationships would have to be treated with the greatest care.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States of America) expressed his general agreement with the Executive Secretary and with Mr. Augenthaler. In particular he wished to emphasize his agreement with the recommendation that the Council's procedure of dividing N.G.O's into categories should not be followed. He suggested a relatively severe selection to avoid encumbering the ITO with relations with organizations whose functions with regard to those of the ITO might be relatively unimportant. He did think however that, without following in the foot-steps of the Council, useful information might be gained from consideration of the Council's document E/43/Rev.2, of the 21st June 1946. The most important distinction to be borne in mind was that the privileges of N.G.O's were not those which either the Havana Charter or the United Nations Charter had granted to Governments, to non-member Governments and to Specialized Agencies. Whereas the latter could participate in discussions without the right to vote, N.G.O's could only be heard upon invitation. He did not agree with the Executive Secretary that the Director-General should establish a register. This would place an undue burden on the Director-General and he suggested that the latter should submit a list for approval by the Executive Board. It might be found useful, to draw up some standard regulations as the FAO had done to avoid ad hoc decisions which might cause resentment.

As the Executive Secretary had explained, the most important consultations would take place between sessions when the Director-General could invite N.G.O's to express their views on problems which he had been instructed to deal with.

Finally, with regard to the First Conference of the ITO, instead of burdening the Executive Secretary with the choice of N.G.O's to be invited, he thought the Interim Commission should approve the list of organizations prepared by the Executive Secretary and submit them for approval by the Conference.

The CHAIRMAN, referring to the statement made by Mr. Stinebower, said that the Executive Secretary had stated that it was desirable not to place upon the Director-General the responsibility of the choice, but rather that the Director-General should act subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

With regard to the first Conference, the Executive Secretary had meant that he would propose a list drawn from the non-governmental Organizations included in the list of the Economic and Social Council for approval by the Executive Committee.

Mr. LECUYER was not quite clear about the character of the Advisory Committee to which reference had been made by the Executive Secretary. He said the matter required careful consideration to avoid a tendency for such a Committee to become permanent. Not only would it tend to acquire rights not originally intended for it, but it would be difficult to arrive at a satisfactory composition.

The CHAIRMAN agreed that the matter of the Advisory Committee would need careful consideration.

Mr. TONKIN (Australia) said that the statement of the Executive Secretary had been helpful and that his proposals appeared acceptable. Some however would require further study. The preparation of the list was a matter of importance and he was glad to hear that such a list would have to be approved by the Executive Board. He suggested that re-examination of the list be governed by experience gained as to the value of the collaboration of each of these bodies. The question of the Advisory Committee could be held over until the ITO itself decided whether to establish it or not. Regarding the distribution of documents, he felt that some documents should be withheld from these bodies.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the Executive Secretary would circulate to the Sub-Committee the Supplementary Oral statement he had made to the Executive Committee.

Mr. STINEBOWER wished to point out that he did not really mean that the Executive Board be considered as the alternative consultative organ to the Advisory Committee. He thought it might well be that the Conference would want to have consultations with an Advisory Committee of N.G.O's. The Director-General might also want to have some machinery of consultation and that matter could be examined on its merits.

Mr. VINCENT (United Kingdom) agreed that the list of N.G.O's of the Economic and Social Council be taken as the basis but he thought there might be organizations not included in the list which could be useful to the ITO. He further thought that the question of dividing N.G.O's into categories should not be too lightly dismissed; it might be advisable to divide these bodies into two categories: one comprising those N.G.O's which were normally to be invited to the

Conference and another including organizations which should be invited only when specific matters were under discussion.

He had at first thought it unwise to give N.G.O's any semi-permanent form of representation. But he thought that the Director-General should be given some discretion and an Advisory Committee might be helpful.

Mr. POLITIS (Greece) expressed the view that the Advisory Committee should not be a standing Committee because this would tend to give it rights which he did not think it should have and there would be great competition to obtain membership.

Mr. WOULBROUN (Benelux) thought that the report of the Executive Secretary was an excellent basis for the study of these relationships. He agreed with other speakers that the responsibility for the choice of the N.G.O's should not be placed only on the Director-General.

The CHAIRMAN called the attention of the Committee to the letter contained in Annex B of document ICITO/EC.2/11, from the President of the International Chamber of Commerce, and suggested that the Executive Committee consider it and, if deemed advisable, ask the Representative of the I.C.C. to appear before the Sub-Committee. It was obvious that other Representatives of non-governmental Organizations present at the meeting could, in accordance with terms of reference of the Interim Commission of the ITO, be heard by the Executive Committee or its Sub-Committee. He invited any such representatives that wished to do so to address the Committee.

Mr. W. PHILLIPPS (International Chamber of Commerce) expressed his great interest in the discussion and said the organization he represented was in a position, in view of

its character and experience, to give valuable information to the ITO. It had committees which could count on long experience in matters with which the ITO was directly concerned and he thought that the collaboration of the I.C.C. would be found valuable not only in the Sessions of the ITO Conference but, much more, in the constant contacts which he hoped would exist between the Director-General and the subsidiary bodies of the ITO and the various organs of the I.C.C. They would always be ready to assist the work of the Organizations.

The CHAIRMAN said the ample discussion of the question would be very useful to the Sub-Committee. There appeared general agreement with the suggestions of the Executive Secretary. Points of difference could be examined by the Sub-Committee, which would be receiving further working papers and would be able to avail itself of the suggestions of those N.G.O's which it might wish to consult with it.

The proposal to refer the question to the Sub-Committee on Administration was accepted.

Representation of the Interim Commission on the Interim Coordinating Committee for International Commodity Arrangements. (ICITO/EC.2/3) (Item 3 of the Agenda).

The CHAIRMAN invited nominations for a representative of the Interim Commission to be Chairman of the I.C.C.I.C.A.

Mr. COUILLARD (Canada) expressed his appreciation of the past services of Sir James HELMORE in this position and proposed his re-nomination.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States) said anyone who had followed the work of the I.C.C.I.C.A. would appreciate the capable manner in which Sir James Helmore had carried out his functions and he was therefore happy to second the proposal.

Mr. LECUYER also wished to record his appreciation of the services rendered by Sir James Helmore and supported the proposal.

Mr. TONKIN (Australia) said he did not wish to propose any other name but wished to make some remarks on the work accomplished by the Committee. Commodity matters had been dealt with in a coordinated manner largely because the principles of Chapter VI of the Havana Charter had been generally applied. He referred to Annual Review which had been published last year and which provided a very useful survey. The number of Commodity discussions which had taken place and the importance of the International Wheat Agreement and the International Wool Agreement were evidence of the interest taken by Governments in Commodity problems. As the scarcity of products decreased, there would be greater need for the application of the provisions of Chapter VI of the Havana Charter. In view of the importance of continuity of composition of the Committee, he thought the Interim Commission should continue to avail itself of the experience of Sir James Helmore.

The CHAIRMAN declared Sir James Helmore unanimously nominated to represent the Interim Commission.

Mr. VINCENT (United Kingdom) thanked the Delegates of Canada, United States and France for proposing the name of Sir James Helmore. He thought it might be advisable to have a person in Washington who might replace Sir James Helmore at meetings arranged in the U.S.A. which he might not be able to attend.

Mr. STINEBOWER (United States) said his delegation had no strong views on the matter, but in view of the infrequent meetings of the Committee and of the fact that it was unlikely

to be necessary to arrange emergency meetings, he thought no alternative was needed.

The Committee concurred in this view.

Draft financial and Staff Regulations for the International Trade Organization (ICITO/EC.2/10) (Item 11 of the Agenda).

The CHAIRMAN suggested that after any general discussion that might ensue, the matter be referred to the Sub-Committee on Administration.

The Executive Committee approved the proposal that the question be referred to the Sub-Committee on Administration.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.