RECENT ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN RELATION TO PRODUCTION AND MARKETING TECHNIQUES IN LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its meeting in May 1962 Committee III agreed that measures to improve production and marketing techniques as they affect less-developed countries should be given further consideration at the next meeting of the Committee (L/1768, paragraph 33). The secretariat was asked to prepare a paper briefly describing the activities in this field in other international agencies.

2. A note prepared by the secretariat in March 1960 (COM.III/22) described problems of marketing for less-developed countries and reviewed in general activities of other inter-governmental organizations. The present paper is designed to bring up to date the information supplied in Section B of that document.

A. ACTIVITIES RELATING TO PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES

3. During the past two years the various regional commissions, with the collaboration of the FAO and the ILO, have undertaken a number of projects to improve production techniques in the less-developed countries. In particular, the Economic Commission for Africa has been actively considering means to increase production and productivity in the region by institutional and technical improvements, soil conservation, locust control and the development of fisheries. The ECA has also established a standing Committee on Natural Resources and Industrialization which is to examine existing industries and to consider prospects for improving their efficiency, as well as setting up new industries. It is intended that studies will be carried out by the ECA over the next two years to improve production in the following industries in Africa: energy (particularly hydro-electric power and oil); iron and steel; non-ferrous metals (prospects of developing further processing of ores); textiles (prospects of increased production for export); timber manufactures; fertilizers; building materials; the construction industry; food processing and selected transport equipment. The ECA undertook specific projects with Tanganyika on the agricultural aspects of that country's three-year development plan, including projects on tea, irrigation, coffee and wattle bark. The ECA also held discussions in Mozambique on tea schemes, in Southern Rhodesia on coffee and farm machinery co-operatives and in Northern Rhodesia on rural development as well as on coffee and tea schemes. The ECA also examined the question of land reform in Ethiopia and in the Sudan, and looked into the question of the development of timber resources in Africa.
4. The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East has been actively pursuing various projects designed to improve production techniques in the countries in the region. It has continued providing technical advice on specific industries and has progressed with surveys of the following industries: iron and steel; machine tools; copper, zinc and tin. It has undertaken projects in relation to the promotion of co-operation by the exchange of raw materials between two or more countries in the region in the setting up of new industries such as rolling mills for rails, aluminium fabricating plants, and selected engineering works. The ECAFE Mineral Resources Committee carries out periodic reviews of current mining activities in the region including the development of new mines and the installation and expansion of mineral processing plants. The ECAFE plans to convene a seminar on new steel-making techniques in collaboration with the ECOSOC, the DOE and the ECLA. In 1962 a seminar on the development of the chemical and allied industries was held, and a second symposium on the development of petroleum resources. A seminar on fertilizers is planned for 1963 or 1964. In cooperation with the ILO the ECAFE has undertaken a study of facilities for "training in industry" in the field of metals and engineering. Surveys and studies are being undertaken by the ECAFE on the development of small-scale industries, particularly as regards production and marketing techniques. In this connexion, "industry feasibility surveys" have begun and the ECAFE secretariat has undertaken to publish regularly a "Small Industries Bulletin" containing information on current technological advances of particular interest to small manufacturers.

5. The Economic Commission for Latin America has undertaken a variety of projects designed to improve production techniques in the Latin American States. Work has continued in the Central American Economic Co-operation Committee on the problems of agricultural production in Central America and the possibilities of specialization for the regional supply of grains and dairy products. The Committee is examining industrial specialization in the region in the following branches of industry in order to determine the first plants to supply the area's common market under the integration régime: tyres and inner tubes; copper wire and cable; raw materials for detergents; glass containers; sheet glass; electric lamps; caustic soda; chloride and chlorated insecticides. The Advisory Group on Economic Planning and Development has been giving advice and assistance to a number of countries in liaison with the ILO and FAO, and has operated in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Haiti and Venezuela. Special attention has been given to the development of agricultural productivity in Bolivia.

6. ECLA has also been continuing studies on the development of Brazil's heavy metal-transforming industries and will deal with prospects for the domestic manufacture of machine tools, diesel engines, textile machinery and equipment for the chemical industry. In Argentina, similar work is directed towards factors influencing the domestic manufacture of industrial equipment for petroleum refining, petro-chemicals, electric power, pulp and paper and steel manufactures. Work has been completed on the textile industries of Chile and Brazil which showed the need for improving over-all efficiency and labour productivity. Preparations have been made in co-operation with the ILO to start similar studies in a number of other countries in the region.
7. A joint ECLA/FAO project on timber resources and prospects has been completed which showed that Latin America possesses forest resources of considerable potential productive capacity. Livestock studies have been completed by ECLA and the FAO in Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay and Venezuela. The ECLA secretariat also completed studies on productivity and costs of coffee production in relation to economic development.

8. The ECLA secretariat assisted in the establishment of the Latin American Steel Institute and is now collaborating with this organization. Continuing ECIA projects of high priority involve studies in the economies of scale, particularly in the following industries: textiles, chemicals and petro-chemicals, pulp and paper, metal transforming and iron and steel.

9. The Food and Agricultural Organization has been assisting the less-developed countries in improving their production and marketing techniques for agricultural products in liaison with the various regional commissions. In the ECAFE region the FAO has carried out some work on the production, protection and processing of coconut and coconut products, and on the production and marketing of meat and livestock. A livestock survey was conducted by the FAO with the Government of Ethiopia with a view to ascertaining supplies available for export. This complemented a wider survey of the region made earlier by the FAO which had culminated in the African Livestock and Meat Marketing Centre.

B. ACTIVITIES RELATING TO MARKETING TECHNIQUES

10. At the eighteenth session of the ECAFE held from 6-9 March 1962, it was agreed that the ECAFE Committee on Trade should continue its review of developments of the trade and commercial policies of the ECAFE countries, and provide assistance to national trade promotion agencies by furnishing information and advice on problems of trade policy and promotion. It was also agreed that a fifth series of intra-regional trade promotion talks should be held in 1963, and that an ad hoc Committee of representatives of member governments should assist in the preparations for an Asian Trade Fair to be held in Pakistan late in 1963. With these projects in mind, the ECAFE secretariat was instructed to continue its work on export promotion techniques and to act as clearing house for the collection and dissemination of commercial information not generally available to countries in the region. Furthermore, the secretariat was instructed to continue publication of "Trade Promotion News" providing information on national trade promotion agencies, international trade fairs and exhibitions, trade missions, commercial intelligence and market research activities, trade promotion techniques, commercial arbitration, standardization of commodities and products, certification and marketing procedures and shipping rates. In 1963 a Working Party on Small-Scale and Handicraft Industries, is to be convened under the auspices of the ECAFE which will examine, among other things, regional co-ordination in production and marketing techniques.

11. Under the UN Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance a third Regional Seminar on Trade Promotion under the auspices of the ECAFE has been scheduled for 1964. It was agreed that the Seminar should examine questions such as the rôle of governments in export promotion; the rôle of Chambers of Commerce and
trade associations in the promotion of trade, as well as practical aspects of trade promotion, such as advertising techniques and effective marketing methods.

12. The Joint ECAFE/FAO Agricultural Division has continued in recent months to co-ordinate studies and activities in mutually agreed fields bearing on the agricultural problems of the region. In particular, the division examined the implications of national plans for regional trade in sugar, rice, oilseeds and oil. The result of these studies were used by the ECAFE secretariat in its work of regional co-operation in trade. The ILO has been co-operating with the ECAFE in organizing training courses in trade promotion.

13. Under its project on the Marketing of Agricultural Products, the ECAFE intends to continue studies of marketing problems and methods in relation to selected products such as sugar, rice, tobacco, fish, dairy products and meat. Market surveys have been completed on hides and skins, coconut and coconut products, and spices.

14. At its third session, the Economic Commission for Africa adopted certain resolutions on African foreign trade by which the Executive Secretary was requested to establish an ECA Standing Committee on Trade and to lend his assistance in connexion with the preparation and conduct of a Conference of African businessmen to take place during the current calendar year.

15. At the fourth session of the ECA held in February-March 1962 a Resolution to establish an African Institute for Economic and Social Development was adopted, and it was agreed at that session that the new Standing Committee on Trade should hold its first meeting in May 1962; this was later postponed until 12-22 September 1962. Three new working parties on West African problems were established to deal with fiscal policy, the structure of overland trade and trade promotion. It was agreed that the ECA should continue to issue its "Foreign Trade News Letter" giving information on marketing and on foreign trade promotion, trade agreements, tariffs, quotas and similar matters.

16. In response to ECA Resolution 25(III), the Executive Secretary in co-operation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the FAO planned to convene in June 1962 a meeting of government officials responsible for commodity stabilization and export policy, including officials concerned with marketing of specific products, in particular, vegetable oils and oilseeds, long-staple cotton, coffee, cocoa and sisal.

17. The African and Malagasy Organisation for Economic Co-operation which came into being in September 1961, established in January 1962 the Association for African and Malagasy Economic Co-operation and Development, which plans to undertake a number of projects in the field of economic policy including marketing studies directed towards the expansion of inter-African trade.
18. In view of the increasing need for economic planning in the Latin American area, the Economic Commission for Latin America recently decided to broaden in scope the ECIA/EPTAO Economic Development Training Programme. It was also agreed to establish a Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning with terms of reference that would involve, inter alia, measures designed to improve production and marketing techniques in the Latin America countries. The ECIA secretariat hopes to be in a position shortly to undertake studies under Project 32 of the Commission on the possibility of expanding production of Latin American exports.

19. Governments of the less-developed countries wishing to obtain assistance in relation to the establishment or management of Marketing Boards and similar bodies are free to call upon the assistance of the FAO. In this connexion, the Joint Session of the Committee on Commodity Problems, and the Commission on International Commodity Trade held from 15-23 May 1962, considered on its agenda the following item: "National Marketing Boards and Price Stabilization Fund; examination of methods of operation with a view to determining, on the basis of experience gained, whether such methods might, with advantage, be employed more widely". The Joint Session in considering this item had before it two documents including one entitled "The Role of Marketing Boards for Export Crops in Developing Countries". It was agreed at the session that the activities of the Board directed towards the strengthening of technical assistance and the improvement of internal purchasing methods, were of much practical value, particularly for less-developed countries and for agricultural commodities, and that an extension of such a system might be considered advisable in some cases. The Joint Session was informed that further work on National Marketing Boards and the Stabilization Fund was being contemplated by the FAO in co-operation with the Economic Commission for Africa at the request of the Executive Secretary of that Commission.