

625 (VII). Land reform

A

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the Secretary-General's progress report⁶ on land reform prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 524 (VI) of 12 January 1952,

Noting with satisfaction the activities of the regional economic commissions and of the specialized agencies in promoting land reform and in preparing studies and analyses of the various aspects of land reform,

Recalling the belief expressed in General Assembly resolution 524 (VI) that rapid improvements in existing agrarian structures and land tenure systems in many under-developed countries require large-scale financial outlays,

Recalling also that General Assembly resolution 524 (VI) urged the governments of Member States to consider making funds available for projects of agrarian reform and invited the institutions providing international loans to give sympathetic consideration to loan applications from under-developed countries for development projects which are designed to implement their programmes of agrarian reform including projects designed to bring new lands under agricultural cultivation, and invited these institutions, consistent with their maintenance as self-supporting entities, to consider making any such loans on terms of interest and amortization designed to place the smallest feasible burden on the borrowing countries,

Recalling the terms of reference of a committee of experts to be set up under Economic and Social Council resolution 416 A (XIV) of 23 June 1952 to prepare a detailed plan for establishing a special fund for grants-in-aid and for low-interest, long-term loans to under-developed countries for the purpose of helping them, at their request, to accelerate their economic development and to finance non-self-liquidating projects which are basic to their economic development,

1. *Recommends* that governments include in their replies to the Secretary-General's questionnaire on land reform relevant information on the financial implications of their programmes of agrarian reform and their development projects designed to implement such programmes, on their capacity to finance such programmes internally and on the extent of financial assistance needed from outside, so as to enable the Secretary-General to consolidate, analyse and incorporate the information so received in his report to the Economic and Social Council to be submitted under paragraph 8 of Economic and Social Council resolution 370 (XIII) of 7 September 1951;

2. *Requests* the committee of experts to be set up under Economic and Social Council resolution 416 A (XIV) to consider the feasibility of financing programmes of agrarian reform and development projects

⁶ See document A/2194.

designed to implement programmes of agrarian reform as one of the important fields of activity for the proposed special fund for grants-in-aid and for low-interest, long-term loans.

411th plenary meeting,
21 December 1952.

B

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 401 (V) and 524 (VI) of 20 November 1950 and 12 January 1952 respectively and Economic and Social Council resolution 370 (XIII) of 7 September 1951 on land reform in under-developed countries,

Taking note of the resolutions⁷ on land reform adopted by the Sixth Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,

Considering:

(a) That world food resources have increased less rapidly than world population so that in the world as a whole food consumption *per capita* is now less than it was fifteen years ago,

(b) That the lack of land and the defective agrarian structure in several geographical areas of the world are among the factors preventing a rapid increase in agricultural production in those areas and that these factors consequently render more difficult attempts to overcome food crises and to raise the general standard of living, especially in the under-developed countries,

Convinced:

(a) That the expediting of the process of bringing new lands under cultivation and the rapid improvement of the agrarian structure and present land tenure systems raise serious technical or financial problems in several geographical areas,

(b) That the isolated efforts of States Members of the United Nations to increase agricultural productivity and to bring new lands under cultivation would be more effective if they co-operated earnestly on a regional plane and if they took full advantage of available technical and financial assistance on the international plane,

(c) That the governments of Member States and the specialized agencies should, in accordance with the recommendations contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 451 A (XIV) of 28 July 1952, make greater efforts, on the national and international plane, to grant high priority to the production and distribution of food in order to ensure a more rapid increase in the availability thereof and, by so doing, to reduce the effects of food crises by combating other natural and technical factors which lead to smaller harvests,

1. *Recommends* that the governments of Member States take every possible step, on the national plane and, if appropriate, on a regional plane, to expedite the carrying out of their land reform programmes

⁷ See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Report of the 6th Session of the Conference*, 19 November-6 December 1951, Rome, Italy, March 1952.

and, where appropriate, to bring new lands under cultivation and to increase their agricultural productivity, especially of foodstuffs, by following the recommendations and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and by the Economic and Social Council on those questions;

2. *Invites* the Secretary-General and the specialized agencies, in carrying out their studies and activities on the questions of land reform to place particular emphasis on:

(a) The speeding up, at the request of the interested governments and according to the circumstances prevailing in different countries or regions, of such practical measures to encourage the promotion and the carrying out of their land reform programmes as:

The convening of international and regional conferences on the development of natural resources, especially land resources, and on land administration,

The organization of seminars on problems connected with the welfare and economic and social progress of rural populations in a country or in countries of a geographical region, and

The setting up of regional centres for training experts in the several specialized fields relating to the improvement of agricultural structures;

(b) Practical measures of technical assistance so as to increase agricultural output, especially of foodstuffs, to prevent the loss of, or decrease in, harvests of those foodstuffs and to improve production methods, increase sales and encourage equitable distribution;

3. *Reiterates* paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 524 (VI) which "Urges the governments of Member States, in working out their fiscal policies, to give active consideration to making funds available for projects of agrarian reform and invites the institutions providing international loans to give sympathetic consideration to loan applications from under-developed countries for development projects which are designed to implement their programmes of agrarian reform including projects designed to bring new lands under agricultural cultivation, and invites these institutions, consistent with their maintenance as self-supporting entities, to consider making any such loans on terms of interest and amortization designed to place the smallest feasible burden on the borrowing countries";

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to assist the governments of Member States, at their request, to give to the actions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council with regard to the question of land reform the widest possible publicity among farm organizations and other interested persons or groups, in order to ensure that the policy recommendations of the United Nations shall be widely known and understood.

*411th plenary meeting,
21 December 1952.*

626 (VII). Right to exploit freely natural wealth and resources

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the need for encouraging the under-developed countries in the proper use and exploitation of their natural wealth and resources,

Considering that the economic development of the under-developed countries is one of the fundamental requisites for the strengthening of universal peace,

Remembering that the right of peoples freely to use and exploit their natural wealth and resources is inherent in their sovereignty and is in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. *Recommends* all Member States, in the exercise of their right freely to use and exploit their natural wealth and resources wherever deemed desirable by them for their own progress and economic development, to have due regard, consistently with their sovereignty, to the need for maintaining the flow of capital in conditions of security, mutual confidence and economic co-operation among nations;

2. *Further recommends* all Member States to refrain from acts, direct or indirect, designed to impede the exercise of the sovereignty of any State over its natural resources.

*411th plenary meeting,
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627 (VII). Activities of regional economic commissions and economic development of under-developed countries

The General Assembly,

Considering that the report^a of the Economic and Social Council (chapter III, section V) gives an account of the interesting activities of the Economic Commissions for Latin America and for Asia and the Far East in the field of economic development of under-developed countries,

Considering the important contribution which the Economic Commission for Europe can make to the economic development of the under-developed countries, not only by its action on behalf of the less-developed regions of Europe, but also by the collaboration it has established with the other regional economic commissions in carrying out joint studies,

Bearing in mind that the economic development of under-developed countries, consistent with the objectives set forth in Article 55 of the Charter, namely, the promotion of "higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development", can best be carried out through co-ordination among the countries of a region and among the various regions,

Bearing in mind that the regional economic commissions have become effective instruments of international economic co-operation and, for that reason, should continue to play an important part in the work

^a See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventh Session, Supplement No. 3.*