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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
Committee on Housing and  
Physical Planning  
First session  
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Item 11 of the provisional Agenda

NOTE ON THE  
REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF  
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, BUILDING AND PLANNING <sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> The following short note was prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations, Housing, Building and Planning Branch in the Bureau of Social Affairs.

## INTRODUCTION

The following is a brief account of the major points of interest to the Economic Commission for Africa resulting from the second session of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning (22 January to 4 February 1964). The items below are listed according to the order in which they appear in the Committee's report on its second session.

### 1. Item II - Housing, Building and Planning in the Development Decade

- (a) The draft resolution proposed for approval by the General Assembly<sup>1/</sup> recommends inter alia that Member States assume a major role in the solution of the housing problem in each country and to this end make provision in their national development planning for the necessary activities and resources, including:
- i) Establishing for this purpose central and other organizations or bodies in charge of housing and town and country planning and sufficiently empowered with the necessary authority;
  - ii) Taking all necessary measures to develop a building materials and components industry and to establish national organizations for building design and construction with a view to carrying out capital construction programmes on the basis of maximum utilization of local resources, industrialized construction techniques and typification and standardization in design and construction;
  - iii) The preparation and implementation of programmes for training architects, construction engineers and skilled workers in sufficient numbers to carry out national development programmes.
- (b) The resolution also requests an annual report on national construction programmes. This emphasized the need for adequate statistical data, the collection of which requires close collaboration between regional commissions and national agencies.
- (c) Annual housing requirements in each underdeveloped region were estimated by the Secretariat at 10 dwellings per 1,000. <sup>2/</sup> This estimate was accepted by the Committee.
- (d) The Committee recommended regional and national seminars and workshops on housing statistics and programmes and proposed also that seminars be held in the field of the building materials and construction industries, financing, and housing policy and administration. <sup>3/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> United Nations Report of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning (second session), United Nations document E/3858, resolution I (II), para. 32.

<sup>2/</sup> Ibid., paragraph 19.

<sup>3/</sup> Ibid., Annex I, project No. 1.5.

2. Item III - Finance for Housing and Community Facilities

- (a) The external capital requirements estimate accepted by the Committee indicates that developing regions will require a minimum additional annual flow of international capital resources for housing programmes of about \$1 billion. <sup>4/</sup> The minimum estimates total capital requirements for this sector (not including community facilities) totals nearly \$5 billion.
- (b) A draft resolution which was withdrawn but is reflected in the report <sup>5/</sup> requested the Secretariat to study the possibilities of increasing the flow of private capital through investment guarantees and other means, including the proposed United Nations capital development fund. In this connexion, the Committee requested that these aspects of external financing should be adequately presented in the final report on financing due for its third session, and that consultants and rapporteurs should co-operate with the regional commissions and the Headquarters Secretariat on this study.
- (c) During the discussion of this item, it was evident that the regional commissions will be expected to assist governments in selecting projects and preparing applications for submission to international financial agencies.

3. Item IV - Planning and Implementation of Pilot Projects

- (a) Pilot projects were given a high priority. But adequate preparation, supervision, evaluation and dissemination of information were considered of fundamental importance. The regional commissions were seen as playing an important and growing role in assisting in the implementation and evaluation of such projects. <sup>6/</sup>

4. Items V and VI are covered in the section on the international programme below.

5. Item VII - Co-ordination and Organization of Existing Programmes in Housing

- (a) In the discussion of the note by the Secretary-General on co-ordination and organization of international programmes in this field, several resolutions were introduced. The one finally adopted by the Committee called for the establishment of a Centre for Housing, Building and Planning within the Department of Economic

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<sup>4/</sup> Ibid., paragraph 38.

<sup>5/</sup> Ibid., paragraph 58.

<sup>6/</sup> Ibid., paragraph 75.

and Social Affairs as a first step in the development of an integrated and comprehensive United Nations unit in this field.<sup>7/</sup> During the debate on this question, the key function of the regional economic commissions was stressed. The Committee emphasized the need for a housing, building and planning committee in each region and the need for strengthening the regional commissions' resources in this area.<sup>8/</sup>

6. Item VIII - The International Programme in Housing, Building and Planning

In the discussion on the international programme, the Committee requested the Secretary-General, in the light of all the recommendations made by it, and in the light of the experience gained by him up to date to: <sup>9/</sup>

- (a) Prepare a five-year programme in the field of housing, building and planning for the period 1966-1970 as a foundation for a major long-term international programme in these fields;
- (b) Call on the members of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning to submit new recommendations for such a programme;
- (c) Submit **this** programme to the Committee at its third session.

It was understood that the collaboration and assistance of the Economic Commissions will be of the utmost importance in constructing and elaborating a successful long-range programme of this magnitude.

The Committee recognized the inadequacy of the present staff resources available to the Secretariat at Headquarters and the regional economic commissions for carrying out even that part of the draft international work programme in housing, building and planning to which it accorded highest priority. In view of the critical need for international action in this area, the Committee requested the Secretary-General to implement the projects contained in the programme with all possible speed, as staff and other resources become available to him. It also authorized the Secretary-General to use discretion in assigning priorities for the implementation of the different projects depending on the resources that he can obtain during 1964.<sup>10/</sup>

During the period 1964-1965, the following studies and programmes are to be undertaken by the Secretariat in collaboration with the regional economic commissions, according to the priorities agreed upon and subject to requests from

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<sup>7/</sup> Ibid., resolution 5 (11), paragraph 207.

<sup>8/</sup> Ibid., paragraph 184.

<sup>9/</sup> Ibid., paragraph 212.

<sup>10/</sup> Ibid., paragraph 214.

governments and the availability of funds. (Project numbers correspond to the numbers in Annex I of the report setting out the international work programme).

AREA I. Policies Programming and Administration in Housing, Building and Planning

<u>Project No.</u>	<u>Study or Programme</u>
1.1	Annual progress reports on the implementation of resolution 1 (II) on national housing construction programmes will be prepared for submission to the Housing, Building and Planning Committee, subject to ECOSOC approval.
1.2	A final report will be prepared on the implementation of the Economic and Social Council's resolution 975F (XXXVI) on priorities in housing, building and planning in the Development Decade, to be distributed to all Member States of the United Nations.
1.3	A final report will be prepared in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 1917 (XVIII) on goals and standards for housing, building and planning programmes in the Development Decade.
1.6	Subject to priority being given by the regional economic commissions, and the availability of funds, seminars on Housing Policy and Administration will be held for Africa, Asia and the Far East and the Middle East.

AREA II. Housing and Related Community Facilities

2.1	Subject to requests from governments and the availability of funds, pilot and demonstration projects will be undertaken on the application of different techniques, including self-help, to low-cost housing in the developing countries.
2.2 )	Study on housing management and tenant education and subject to the priority assigned by the regional commissions, a programme of seminars on the same subject in 1965.
2.3 )	

AREA III. Building and Related Industries

Project No.

Study or Programme

- 3.3 Seminars in all regions on Development of Building Materials and Construction Industries subject to priorities given by regional commissions.

AREA IV. Planning and Development of the Physical Environment

- 4.4 A Manual on Physical Planning Techniques will be prepared to inter alia serve as a guide to integration between economic and physical planning at the national, regional and local levels. This manual will be prepared in collaboration with the regional economic commissions and other interested agencies and members of the Committee appointed in the capacity of rapporteurs to assist in this work.
- 4.5 Study on housing and planning standards for the resettlement of squatters.

AREA V. Financing of Housing and Related Programmes

- 5.2 Regional seminars on Financing of Housing and Urban Development in all regions in 1964/65 subject to regions' priorities.

AREA VI. Survey, Research and Training

- 6.1 Special evaluations of the results of technical assistance will require extensive use of regional commissions.
- 6.2 Final report on promotion of research, training and information will be done in collaboration with regional commissions.
- 6.5 Subject to the availability of funds, a survey of training needs in housing, building and physical planning will be undertaken in collaboration with the regional economic commissions and the interested specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations.

AREA VII. Urbanization

<u>Project No.</u>	<u>Study or Programme</u>
7.2	An interregional expert group will be convened in 1964 to discuss and make recommendations on the Planning and Development of New Towns. The meeting will be convened in collaboration with the regional economic commissions and interested specialized agencies.
7.5	Subject to priority being given by the regional economic commissions and the availability of funds, regional seminars will be held on the Planning and Development of New Towns to discuss the application of the conclusions and recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on the subject to the region.

AREA IX. Technical Co-operation and Assistance

- 9.1 Within the limitations of available resources, high priority will be given to pilot projects which will be carried out in accordance with the criteria established by the Committee on Pilot Projects, utilizing the resources provided from technical assistance and Special Fund sources, as well as from voluntary contributions by governments and others under General Assembly resolution 1508 (XV).
- 9.2 Trends in the United Nations programme of technical co-operation in the housing, building and planning fields, will be kept under continuous review and evaluation with a view to establishing, for the guidance of governments, objectives, criteria and priorities. Special attention will be given in this connexion to pilot projects and projects implemented with Special Fund assistance.

ACTION BY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

The Economic and Social Council, at its thirty-seventh session, considered<sup>11/</sup> the report of the second session of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning and expressed satisfaction with the progress which the Committee had made along the lines laid down at its first session.

It agreed that the Committee's long-term task was to provide aid and guidance in the formulation of detailed housing, building and planning policies designed to achieve practical results as rapidly as possible. To that end, an advance should be made on three interdependent but separate fronts: technology, investment and organization.

The Council shared the Committee's concern about the deteriorating housing situation in most countries during the past decade, especially in the developing countries where the growth of urban populations was approximately twice as high as the rate of total population growth and had caused serious conditions of over-crowding expanding slum areas and shanty towns in and around urban centres.

On the recommendation of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, the Council passed three resolutions, one of which was to be submitted to the General Assembly at its nineteenth session for action. These resolutions are:

Resolution 1024A (XXXVII) - called upon Member States to assume major role in the solution of housing problems and to make provision in their national development plans for the necessary activities and resources.

Resolution 1024B (XXXVII) - which requested the Secretary-General to initiate a study of the achievements, possibilities and current programmes in the field of industrialization of housing in developing countries and an extensive international exchange of experience in this field through the proposed Centre for Housing, Building and Planning, the regional economic commissions, and other international bodies using as much as possible such studies, information, experience and facilities as might already be available and concentrating particularly on those aspects which remained unexplored or offered fruitful development possibilities.

Resolution 1024C which established, within the limits of the current United Nations budget, a Centre for Housing, Building and Planning in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as an important step forward in the development of an integrated and comprehensive United Nations programme. It

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<sup>11/</sup> Report of the Economic and Social Council, 3 August 1963 to 15 August 1964 (document A/5803).



also urged that the proper share of the United Nations funds and other resources available each year be allocated to that programme appropriately reflecting the relative importance of that human sector to the others.

The Council also noted that there was a pressing need for compilation of basic housing, building and development statistics, and welcomed the work that the regional economic commissions were doing in this respect, as well as the collaboration and support they were giving in such fields as regional physical planning and the development of building industry. It was also suggested that the specialized agencies should participate more substantially in the pilot projects programme and that regional economic commissions should assist as appropriate in the projects in their respective region.