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INFORMATION NOTE
on the United Nations World Plan of Action
for the Application of Science and Technology
to Development

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THE WORLD PLAN OF ACTION

for the Application of Science and Technology
to the Development of the Developing Countries

ORIGIN

1. The idea of a World Plan of Action arose as a consequence of the General Assembly Resolution 1944 (XVIII) in which the Assembly had requested the United Nations Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development to examine the possibility of establishing a programme of international cooperation in science and technology for economic and social development of the developing countries. The Advisory Committee in its Third Report ^{1/} (E/4178) presented the view that such a programme of international cooperation in science and technology would be more suitably undertaken within the framework of a World Plan of Action which would be primarily directed towards building up infrastructure for the application of science and technology and would include programmes of concerted attack to solve certain problems of particular importance to these countries.
2. Following on the submission of the Third Report, the ECOSOC ^{2/} approved in its resolution 1155(XLI) the proposals of the Advisory Committee that a World Plan of Action should be prepared and the General Assembly by its resolution 2318 (XXII) endorsed the resolution of ECOSOC and confirmed the objectives of the World Plan of Action as contained in the ECOSOC resolution. By the same resolution, the General Assembly requested that in the preparation of the Plan, regional aspects should be properly taken into consideration and the World Plan of Action itself should be prepared so as to be closely coordinated with the Second Development Decade.
3. In fulfilment, therefore, of the recent General Assembly resolution 2318(XXII) and earlier resolutions of the United Nations, the Advisory

^{1/} UN Document E/4178: Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, Third Report, May 1966.

^{2/} Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Committee is in the process of preparing a World Plan of Action for the application of science and technology to development.

OBJECTIVES

4. The Objectives of this World Plan of Action are:

- (a) To assist the developing countries to build the necessary structure of institutions (national and, when appropriate, regional) and to train the necessary skilled personnel on which the capacity of the developing countries to apply science and technology to their development will depend.
- (b) To promote the more effective application of existing scientific knowledge and technology in the development of the less developed countries and, with that in view, to improve the arrangements for the transfer and adaptation of knowledge and technology already available in more developed countries; and at the same time, to develop a climate in developing countries more favourable to the adoption of innovations in the techniques of production.
- (c) To focus increasingly the attention, and to mobilize the efforts of scientists and research organizations, in highly developed countries as well as in the developing countries, on problems the solution of which will be of special benefit to the developing countries, and to encourage co-operation of developed and developing countries to this end.
- (d) To promote a greater knowledge among governments, the scientific community, the general public and especially young people, in developed as well as developing countries, of the needs of the developing countries for science and technology.

5. The World Plan will be elaborated in terms of action to be implemented by the United Nations system, with targets for national policies and action by the developing and advanced countries. It will consist of two five-year plans which will be co-ordinated with the Second Development Decade and will take account of the possibilities of multinational co-operation.

PLAN STRUCTURE

6. The World Plan of Action will be primarily composed of three regional plans for Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Plan will set targets and define a number of programmes for each region in the following development sectors:

- (a) Science policy and planning; creation and expansion of infrastructure for research and development.
- (b) Natural Resources
- (c) Food and Agriculture
- (d) Industry
- (e) Transport and Telecommunications
- (f) Housing and Urban Planning
- (g) Health
- (h) Education
- (i) Population

PREPARATION OF THE PLAN

7. The responsibility for preparing the regional plans has been allocated to the Regional Economic Commissions. A number of specialized agencies are also responsible for preparing sectorial plans on a global basis to cover programmes within their areas of special competence.
8. The first review of the draft plans for the World Plan of Action will take place at the Eleventh Session of the UN Advisory Committee for the Application of Science and Technology to Development (UNACAST). This will take place in April, 1969, at the UN headquarters in New York.
9. In so far as the African region is concerned, the ECA has already out in the field five consultants who have been visiting member-governments in all the various sub-regions discussing the objectives of the World Plan of Action with various responsible officials and policy-makers in each country. The consultations will also enable the Commission to obtain up-to-date information about the needs and priorities of each member-country. This will assist ECA in preparing the draft plan for the African region, and also provide the background information to enable the programmes proposed to be made more closely relevant to actual priorities existing in the countries themselves.
10. The World Plan of Action will go through a series of reviews and modifications during the next twelve to eighteen months before it becomes incorporated into the Second Development Decade. In any case, between now and the beginning of 1971 when the Second Development Decade begins, the Commission intends to bring more information to the member-countries as to the progress of the World Plan of Action, the main programmes proposed and the directions of progress envisaged. At this early stage, it is not possible to make precise statements about the size of the programmes and the arrangements for implementation. However, it is possible to envisage that when detailed plans are being defined for project implementation, close collaboration will be maintained between the Commission and the appropriate organizations and officials in the member-countries.