

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING
OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION

Held at Hunter College, New York
on Tuesday 14 May 1946, 10:30 a.m.

Present: Mr. Rice (Chairman)

Mr. Campion
Mr. Fedosimov
Mr. Fieu (after 2:00 p.m.)
Mr. Mahalanobis
Mr. Sauvy

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m., and introduced Mr. Pavel I. Fedosimov (U.S.S.R.) referring to a letter from Mr. A. Gromyko representative of the U.S.S.R. to the United Nations, to the Secretary-General, under date of 11 May 1946, announcing the appointment of Mr. Fedosimov as the Soviet representative (temporarily) on the Statistical Commission.

The Chairman also introduced Mr. William J. Bruce, of the Division of Statistical Standards, United States Bureau of the Budget, who is to replace Mr. Venneman as temporary Secretary of the Commission during the interval between the conclusion of its first session and the session of the Economic and Social Council beginning 25 May 1946.

The Chairman reported briefly on the outcome of his conference with the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, which had been arranged at the direction of the Commission for the purpose of discussing plans for future sessions of the Commission. He indicated that tentative agreement has been reached on a meeting to be held in the United States in October 1946, and on subsequent meetings to be held possibly in January and September or October 1947. It was pointed out that it will not be necessary for all sessions of the Statistical Commission to be held in the United States or to be held at the same time as sessions of other Commissions of

the Economic and Social Council. It was observed that some advantage might accrue from synchronizing sessions of the Statistical Commission with meetings of other groups such as the General Assembly of the Inter-American Statistical Institute, which is tentatively planned to be held in Bogota, Colombia, in January 1947, and the conference of the International Statistical Institute, to be held in Washington, D.C. in September or October 1947.

Reference was made to agenda for subsequent sessions, and it was observed that substantive questions dealt with in many of the working papers submitted to the present session of the Commission have not been disposed of definitively. It was agreed therefore that all working papers submitted for this session should be re-submitted at the next session, and further that these and other working papers should be distributed to members of the Commission in advance of the meeting date. It was observed in this connection, that one of the principal topics on the agenda of the next session should be detailed specifications of working arrangements with specialized agencies and the like which had been dealt with only in general outline at the present session.

At this point the U.S.S.R. representative was asked to present any comments he cared to make. He indicated that he had not had sufficient opportunity to become familiar with the work already done by the Commission and therefore expected to participate primarily as an observer. He agreed, however, that he would offer comments and suggestions at any point at which he felt qualified to participate. The Chairman expressed the gratification of the Commission at this co-operative attitude and offered to make himself and the Commission's Secretary available to discuss in detail the background of the Commission's recommendations as formulated in the draft report. He pointed out, however, that at its meeting on 8 May the Commission had decided that it would be impracticable to re-open consideration of substantive decisions already reached at this session;

and he indicated his willingness to assist the U.S.S.R. representative in presenting his views to the Economic and Social Council on any points on which he finds himself in disagreement with the Commission's decisions.

Consideration was then turned to the draft report which had been prepared by the Chairman and Secretary in the interval since the meeting on 8 May. It was observed that the draft had not been completed until late in the day on 10 May, and that a French translation had not been available until 13 May. The draft therefore had not been read by all members of the Commission. For this reason it was suggested that the Commission might wish to recess until 2:00 p.m. to study the draft.

The Chairman again offered to discuss with the U.S.S.R. representative the background for the Commission's recommendation concerning establishment of a Sub-commission on Sampling, as to the advisability of which the U.S.S.R. representative had raised a question. Following a brief discussion of this point and of the order in which sections of the draft would be taken up, the Commission agreed to recess at 11:15 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

At 2:07 p.m. the meeting was reconvened by the Chairman.

Mr. D. K. Lieu (China), who had arrived during the recess, was introduced to the Commission. The Chairman repeated to Mr. Lieu the assurance he had given to Mr. Fedosimov that he and the Commission's Secretary would be available to discuss with him in detail the background of the Commission's recommendations as formulated in the draft report, and invited him to make any comments he wished to present to the Commission.

The Commission then proceeded to consideration of the draft report which had been presented by the Chairman. It was agreed as a matter of procedure that the English text of the report would be regarded as the official text, and that the French translation, with annotations by Mr. Sauvy, would be made available to the Languages Division to serve as a working aid in the preparation of the official French text.

Some discussion was devoted to the substance of the Commission's

recommendation concerning its composition. It was observed that the recommendation is not altogether consistent with the views of the Soviet Government. The principle expressed in the report of the Preparatory Commission (Article 37) on this point was described as being more nearly in line with the wishes of the U.S.S.R. It was pointed out however, that this issue had been debated at length by the Statistical Commission as well as other Commissions of the Economic and Social Council and that the Statistical Commission had reached its decision advisedly, in part on the basis of the views of the President of the Economic and Social Council. It was indicated, moreover, that reconsideration of this issue would not be in line with the Commission's decision at its meeting on 8 May to consider discussion of substantive questions as closed. The Chairman pointed out that dissenting views on recommendations of the Commission could be presented to the Economic and Social Council, and repeated his offer to assist any member of the Commission in obtaining a hearing for such views before the Council in the event of disagreement on substantive matters. The U.S.S.R. representative expressed his intent to avail himself of this opportunity with respect to the question of the basis of selection or appointment of members of the Statistical Commission.

The Commission then resumed consideration of the text of the draft report, and agreed to accept with some modifications the language of the draft for Chapters II and III.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m. until 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, 15 May, at which time the text of Chapter IV will be considered.
