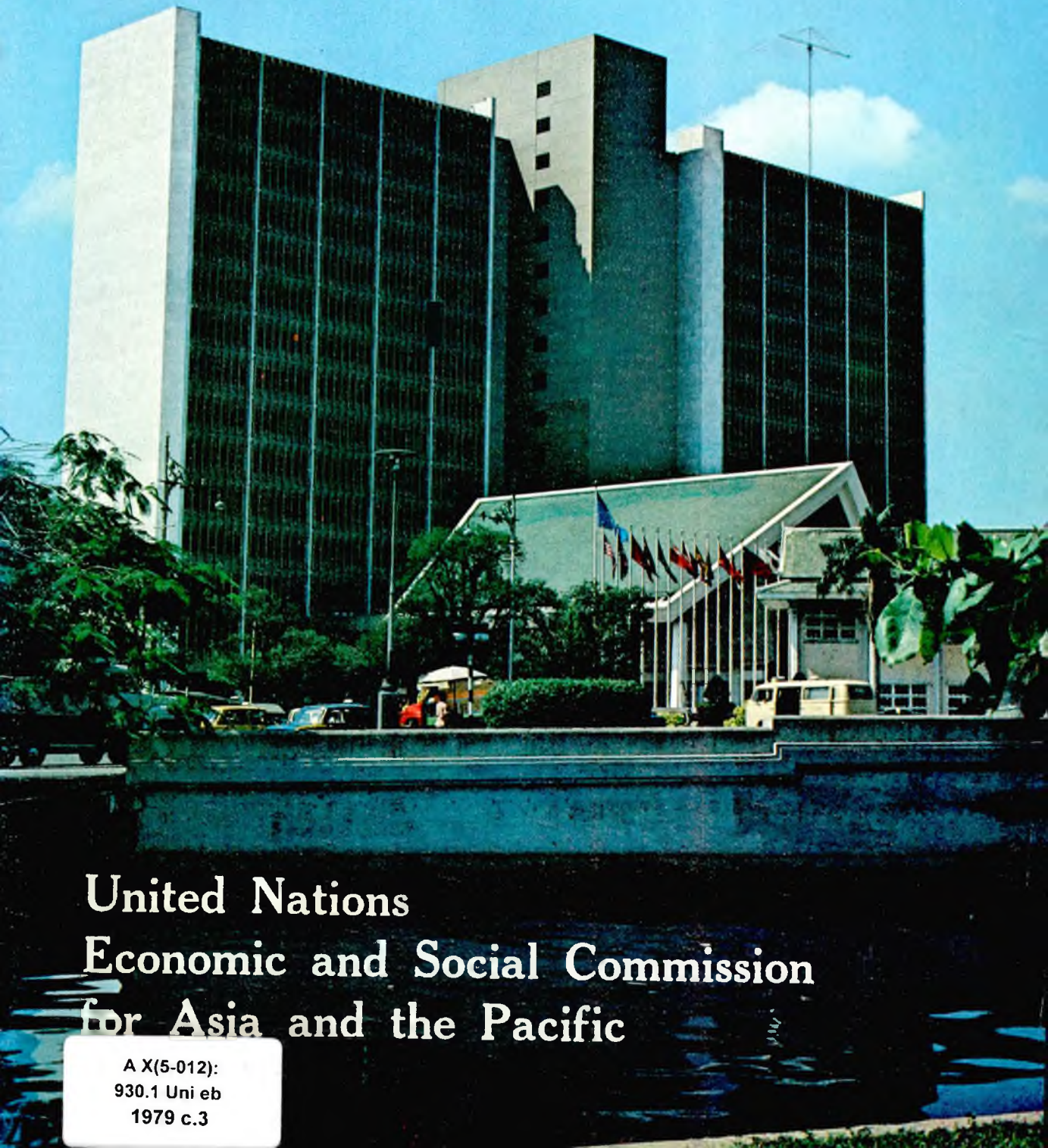
ESCAP IN BRIEF



United Nations
Economic and Social Commission
for Asia and the Pacific

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Front cover: United Nations Building which houses the headquarters of ESCAP and some UN offices in Bangkok.

Back cover: Main Conference Hall at UN Building, Bangkok.

Prepared by UN Information Service,
ESCAP, Bangkok.



United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim with ESCAP Executive Secretary J.B.P. Maramis at United Nations Building, Bangkok

WHAT IS ESCAP – ITS GOALS

ESCAP is the regional arm of the United Nations for Asia and the Pacific. ESCAP – acronym for the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific – serves 2,284 million people (in 1977), or 55 per cent of the world's population.

The ESCAP region extends from Iran in the west to Mongolia in the north, Japan in the north-east and the Cook Islands in the south-east. It covers almost half of the surface of the earth, approximately from longitude 45°E at the western border of Iran to longitude 156°W at the easternmost point of the Cook Islands. Two thirds (67 per cent) of the rural population of the world live in the region. By some estimates, around 700 to 800 million people in the region live below the poverty line. Of 15,000 babies born every hour in the world, 10,000 are born in the region. The percentage of the manufacturing sector to the total gross national product (GNP) in many of the countries in the region is under 10 per cent.

To assist member countries in solving their economic and social problems, ESCAP has developed programmes at three levels: at the regional level, to combat region-wide problems; at the subregional level; and at the country level, by assisting individual Governments in planning and implementing balanced development programmes. Although ESCAP does not itself provide capital resources, it has helped to establish institutions to attract funds for regional and subregional projects, which, in turn, supply development aid.

Despite conflicts and tensions in the region over the past 30 years ESCAP has provided a stable and continuing forum where member countries can meet and work together not only for the development of the region but also for the promotion of regional interests at the global level. For these reasons, ESCAP is sometimes called the "Parliament of Asia and the Pacific".

ESCAP, as one of the five regional economic commissions of the United Nations, is administratively responsible to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. At the same time, it is responsible to its member countries and is subject to their guidance in policy matters under the over-all supervision of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Areas of service

In brief, ESCAP serves regional member countries in the following ways:

- It identifies areas of common problems and facilitates co-operation in the fields of economic and social development of member countries so that coherent national and international action may be taken with a view to increasing levels of economic activity and raising standards of living;
- It provides a forum for debate on economic and social matters among member countries;
- It provides technical assistance and advisory services upon request by member Governments, and assists member countries in attracting necessary assistance from outside sources; and
- It acts as a clearing-house for information.

ESCAP also assists the United Nations Economic and Social Council, its parent body, in discharging its functions in the Asian and Pacific region.

Priority areas

Since 1974, following the guidance of its members, ESCAP has gradually concentrated its efforts in six priority areas, i.e., food and agriculture, energy, raw materials and commodities, transfer of technology, international trade, transnational corporations and external financial resource transfers, and integrated rural development. These priority areas correspond to measures recommended by the United Nations General Assembly at its seventh special session for the establishment of a new international economic order, to create a more favourable climate for economic and social development of the developing countries. Furthermore, ESCAP focuses its attention on the rural poor who makes up the majority of people in the region. These priority areas are also geared to achieving the targets of the Second United Nations Development Decade (1971-1980).

Special efforts are being made to aid the least developed countries, including land-locked and island countries, and to reduce disparities between income groups within countries.

Strategies for the 1980s

In 1978 the Commission adopted a resolution calling for strategies for the 1980s which will ensure social justice and establish a new international economic order more equitable to the developing countries.

The Commission emphasized that the new strategies should not contain over-simplified global targets and unrealistic principles and must recognize the unique characteristics of each developing nation, with flexible approaches in defining development targets.

The major points which the resolution proposed as the basis of the strategies are: measures to remove obstacles to development; emphasis on the priority areas of food and agriculture, energy, raw materials and commodities, transfer of technology, international trade, transnational corporations, external finance and integrated rural development; necessity to reflect the particular needs of the ESCAP region in accordance with national objectives; exploration of new patterns of international co-operation, especially between developing countries, based on the principles of sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit; and measures to ensure that the experiences of nations with different socio-economic systems be fully taken into account.

Concerning ESCAP's development activities, a resolution stressing the role of the public sector in economic development was adopted at the 1978 session. The resolution requested the ESCAP secretariat to take the role played by the public sector into account when conducting ESCAP's activities.

New emphasis and change of name from ECAFE to ESCAP

ESCAP's new approach, adopted in 1974, puts the region's social problems – in particular, mass poverty and measures to cope with it – on an equal footing with the Commission's concern with the economic development of the region.

In 1974, the name of the Commission was changed from ECAFE (Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East) to ESCAP to reflect the new dimensions of its activities.

HOW ESCAP WORKS

ESCAP is an intergovernmental subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Its membership includes independent nations most of which are members of the United Nations in the region and a few non-independent Territories. Non-independent Territories are admitted as associate members and as each attains independence and becomes a member of the United Nations it becomes, as a general rule, a full member of the Commission.

ESCAP provides machinery to help its members and associate members to find solutions to economic and social problems, and to act on matters of common concern.

Main organs of ESCAP

The main organ of ESCAP is its Commission. With participation at the ministerial level, it is the highest legislative forum and discusses and adopts resolutions on all matters within the scope of the regional body. The Commission holds its regular sessions annually, usually in March or April.

Under the Commission, nine legislative (substantive) committees covering specific fields meet at fixed intervals to discuss and make recommendations on questions of common concern to the countries of the region. The nine committees cover the following fields:

- Agricultural development
- Development planning
- Industry, housing and technology*
- Natural resources
- Population
- Social development
- Statistics
- Trade
- Shipping, and transport and communications.

* To be changed to Industry, Human Settlements and Technology from 1979.

These Committees meet periodically and their sessions are attended by representatives of member Governments.

ESCAP also may hold not more than one *ad hoc* conference each year to deal with important matters which do not fall within the purview of the legislative committees.

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission was created at ESCAP's thirtieth session in 1974. Among its other tasks, it maintains close co-operation between the members and the secretariat of the Commission, reviews the draft calendar of meetings prior to its submission to the Commission, and discusses the programmes of work and priorities, including extrabudgetary requirements.

In addition, there are the following bodies which report to the Commission:

- Committee for Co-ordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin (now an Interim Committee)
- Committee for Co-ordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in Asian Offshore Areas (CCOP)
- Committee for Co-ordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in South Pacific Offshore Areas (CCOP/SOPAC)
- Regional Mineral Resources Development Centre
- Special Body on Land-Locked Countries
- Regional Centre for Technology Transfer
- Typhoon Committee
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones
- Intergovernmental Governing Council of the Regional Training and Research Institutions.

Secretariat of ESCAP

The ESCAP conference structure is supported by the ESCAP secretariat, which is part of the United Nations Secretariat. The ESCAP secretariat carries out day-to-day activities in more than a dozen substantive sectors – development planning; trade; industry, housing and technology; agriculture; natural resources; shipping and ports; transport; communications; population; social development; and statistics. To carry out such priority activities as integrated rural development, interdisciplinary action cutting across sectoral lines is also organized. The ESCAP secretariat is headed by the Executive Secretary who is appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Within the various subject fields, the work of the secretariat includes projects aimed at promoting multinational co-operation; studies to pin-point problems and suggest the best strategy for action; meetings to chart suitable approaches to specific problems; training and technical assistance financed with funds from the United Nations budget, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other contributions to ESCAP, including those from member and non-member countries.

A resolution calling for mobilizing extrabudgetary resources by member countries for financing ESCAP projects was adopted by the Commission in 1978. The process of mobilizing resources in which Governments announce intended contributions for the carrying out of the work programmes of ESCAP and regional institutions, raises additional financial resources for the development programmes.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER UNITED NATIONS BODIES

ESCAP works in close co-operation with other bodies in the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The Executive Secretary of ESCAP from time to time hosts interagency meetings of regional representatives of these bodies.

An Environmental Co-ordinating Unit was established in 1978 within the secretariat in co-operation with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) to assess the environmental implications in the work of the substantive divisions of the Commission.

WHAT ESCAP DOES

REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

Integrated programme on rural development

To improve the lot of the most socio-economically disadvantaged 40 per cent of the population, which is estimated at over 400 million people in the region and the absolute majority of whom live in rural areas, the Commission has called for concerted efforts by member Governments, in partnership with specialized agencies, to assist in orienting their development programmes to meet the essential needs of these disadvantaged people. The programme has a multipronged and interdisciplinary approach, including such areas as agriculture, industry, community development, transport and communication, education, health, etc.

The Commission at its thirty-third session (in 1977) adopted a resolution on integrated programme on rural development, making it one of the priority areas in ESCAP's programme of work. An Interagency Co-ordinated Plan of Action for Integrated Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific was formulated through consultations with countries and was endorsed by the Commission. It aims at systematic and co-ordinated international support to national endeavours for rural development, focusing on raising the standard of living and increasing the welfare of the rural community through complementary efforts of the United Nations family. To facilitate harmonious working, the Interagency Committee on Rural Development for the ESCAP Region has been set up, composed of heads of the United Nations agencies and other international organizations concerned in the region, with the ESCAP Executive Secretary as the Chairman. For the execution of the programme, an interagency task force has been set up and a co-ordinator for the programme has been appointed under the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. To participate in the programme more effectively, several Governments have established inter-departmental Committees or groups for integrated rural development and have also appointed national liaison officers to liaise with the international machinery at Bangkok.

The current programme provides facilities and services for interchange of experiences and information; training; assistance in the development and effective application of appropriate technology; and evaluation of methods of planning and approaches to integrated rural development. Another focus of interest is on improving national capabilities to monitor impact of rural development programmes on the living conditions of the poor.

Recent consultations with national liaison officers have helped in ascertaining their specific requirements under the programme and the relative priorities. It is proposed to concentrate initially on a few key areas identified by participating member countries and to build up the programme gradually and pragmatically on the basis of actual field experience and availability of necessary resources.

The Commission in 1978 endorsed the priority being given to matters connected with training, agrarian reforms, local-level planning, area development and building-up of participatory organizations. An *ad hoc* intergovernmental meeting on integrated rural development is scheduled to be held in September 1979.

The Commission also stressed that integrated rural development should be regarded as an approach and strategy governing over-all national development policies.

It recommended that integrated rural development should be accorded high priority in the preparation and formulation of development strategies for the 1980s.

The Commission at its 1978 session welcomed the action taken by the Executive Secretary in developing both country-specific projects and inter-country activities under the inter-agency co-ordinated plan of action as well as ESCAP's integrated programme.

Technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC)

The Commission, in 1974 and 1975, recommended that developing countries should increasingly utilize the technologies developed by them and suited to their needs, and urged maximum utilization of regional skills, capabilities and experience.

ESCAP was the first among the regional commissions of the United Nations to organize, together with UNDP, a meeting on TCDC, held at Bangkok in 1976. It also organized the first regional meeting of a working group of senior officials concerned with TCDC in developing Asian and Pacific countries to follow the global United Nations Conference on TCDC at Buenos Aires in 1978.

ESCAP and the five regional research and training institutions affiliated to it are assisting member Governments by extending advisory services, conducting training courses and awarding fellowships, often arranging their financing through triangular arrangements involving developed countries and developing countries as well as oil-producing countries.

ESCAP has compiled three publications — on training courses, consultancy services and experts available in developing member countries — and has recently com-



Water Resources Development Programme – ground water development in India

menced work on a more comprehensive series of rosters/directories of expertise and institutions in various sectors. It is also collaborating with UNDP in running the global TCDC Information Referral System (TCDC/INRES).

The total value of the 1978 regional technical co-operation programme administered by the secretariat reached a record level of $US 15,810,478. The expansion was attributable to the increased resources received by the secretariat from all sources, particularly extrabudgetary sources.

Regional Network for Agricultural Machinery

Development and improvement of technology in agriculture are of vital importance to the region. The basic emphasis is on improvement of technologies which are used by small farmers. The Regional Network for Agricultural Machinery, which was approved in November 1976 and is based in Los Baños, the Philippines, undertakes research through national institutions and provides guidelines for development of agricultural machinery for specific purposes.

In addition to the agricultural network, ESCAP has undertaken surveys in a number of countries to identify the problems confronting post harvest technology in the region. They are designed to reduce grain losses, improve storage facilities and introduce better distribution systems which would contribute towards substantial economies in the stocking and commercial distribution of agricultural produce.

Meeting of Ministers of Industry

The ESCAP Meeting of Ministers of Industry was held in November 1977. The meeting recommended the establishment of a "club" to promote industrial co-operation among the countries of the region, particularly the least developed countries. Action under the "club" is being taken in respect of Afghanistan and Papua New Guinea.

It also recommended the establishment of an *ad hoc* group of ministers which would consider the problems of implementing new industrial policies and strategies. The first meeting of the group is scheduled to be held at Bangkok at the end of January 1979. The meeting will consider progress made in selected countries regarding the four elements identified by the Ministers' Meeting i.e., strengthening of linkages between industry and other sectors of the economy, in particular agriculture; re-orientation of industrial policies to satisfy the basic needs of the poor; dispersal and relocation of industries away from metropolitan areas; and development of small-scale and medium-scale industries and their linkages with large industries.

Industrialization of Non-Metropolitan Areas

Identification of industrial pilot projects in selected non-metropolitan areas which forms the first phase of the project is now nearing completion. Surveys in Indonesia and the Philippines were completed in 1978. Surveys in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand are expected to be completed in early 1979. In the second phase of the project actual implementation of pilot industrial projects will be undertaken in locations identified by the surveys.

Regional Centre for Technology Transfer

The crucial importance of technology in economic and social development has been well recognized. The Regional Centre for Technology Transfer at Bangalore, India, established in July 1977, promotes exchange of information and experience on appropriate technologies and their transfer among countries in the region. It also provides assistance to member countries, on request, in identifying their technological needs and in evaluating and selecting technology. The Centre operates on the basis of

a network composed of national centres. The Centre extends assistance to the countries in establishing national centres and strengthening existing ones as well as in forging linkages among national centres and the Regional Centre.

Studies have been carried out on technology policies and a series of publications have been issued to Governments on possible improvements. Specific technical assistance has also been provided by ESCAP, on request from member countries, for improvement of their institutions dealing with technologies.

United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD)

ESCAP has been actively engaged in the preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) to be held in 1979. Two regional preparatory meetings were organized. National papers from most of the regional countries as well as the regional paper and programme of action to be considered by UNCSTD were completed on schedule.

Asian Highway

The Asian Highway Project comprises a network of about 65,000 km of international routes, covering 15 countries from the Iranian-Turkish border to Viet Nam in East Asia and Bali, Indonesia, in South-East Asia, with a linkage to Sri Lanka. The project stemmed from the recognition that roads and road transport must be viewed on a regional basis and that national endeavours had to be co-ordinated in order to reflect the needs and interests of the region as a whole.

Asian Highway A-1 is already well known by international road users as an efficient road axle serving the Asian region. It is hoped that the only gap in this road, the stretch through Burma, will be filled in due course, thus enabling road users to travel all the way by road from Europe to the eastern coast of Asia via Bangkok to Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi or to Singapore, Jakarta and Bali. A request for inclusion of Bhutan in the Asian Highway network with a possible linkage to A-41 is also under active consideration. Efforts are also being made to include Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines within the scope of the Guidebooks and Maps prepared by ESCAP.

The Asian Highway project was approved by the Commission at its fifteenth session in 1959 and an Asian Highway Co-ordinating Committee was established in 1964 with 14 member countries.

In the past years, considerable investments have been made to improve the Asian Highway network, particularly Asian Highways A-1 and A-2, bringing its condition up to international standard.



A section of the Asian Highway – Kabul Gorge

Efforts are under way to simplify and co-ordinate border-crossing formalities on this road and thereby facilitate international traffic for tourism and movement of goods. For the land-locked countries – Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan and the Lao People's Democratic Republic – these efforts form the base for the development of their import and export trade.

Through the Asian Highway network, a suitable connexion has been provided between the road transport systems of Europe, Africa and Asia with a view to regional and international co-operation, contributing to improving travel and trade, and cultural and social interchanges.

Preliminary studies are being undertaken to arrange scheduled ferry services to the Philippines and to Australia, thus linking these countries to the Asian Highway system.

Linked with this development of the Asian Highway network, special emphasis is being laid on the development of rural road network and feeder roads which would facilitate exchange of goods and crops between remote rural areas and zones of consumption. The construction of low-cost roads is being encouraged, because, it is recognized that this is one of the basic prerequisites to raise the economic and social level of the rural communities.



Asian Telecommunication Network – a Satellite Communications Research and Training in India

The 1978 Commission session requested member countries to send their comments at an early date so that the draft of an Asian-Pacific agreement concerning compulsory insurance against civil liability in respect of motor vehicles could be finalized.

Detailed Asian Highway maps are being published and distributed free of charge by ESCAP for the benefit of road users. Attempts are also under way for publication of a "Schematic Map of International Highway Networks", showing linkage of the Asian Highway with the Middle East and European road networks, in co-operation with the Economic Commission for West Asia (ECWA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Trans–Asian Railway Network

The Trans-Asian Railway Network is designed to build rail connexions between countries of the region to form an intra-regional network and subsequently to join it up with the railway systems of the Middle East, Europe, Africa and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Trans-Asian Railway Network plan was recognized by the ESCAP Transport and Communication Committee in 1967.

Recently, the emphasis has been placed on developing a network linking rural areas to centres of consumption, distribution and export-import.

Current and projected activities include rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Ho Chi Minh-Hanoi line; studies on suburban railway traffic and railway rapid mass transit for the capital cities of the Trans-Asian Railway Network countries; and studies/surveys on intermodal transport to service the rural sector. ESCAP is drawing up an Asian master plan for the major railways of the region from Iran to Japan similar to the one drawn up for the railways in Europe.

ESCAP is also assisting member countries, through its technical assistance programme, by providing roving missions of experts to advise on railway problems; by organizing regional seminars-cum-study tours and training programmes; and by conducting studies on specific subjects related to railway operational requirements and the introduction of new techniques.

The 1978 Commission session endorsed the strategies for railway development in the region for the next development decade, including a master plan, urban transport development, railway technology transfer and multi-modal transport development.

Telecommunication development in the ESCAP region

The concept of the Asian telecommunication network was first developed in 1964 and a feasibility survey was carried out by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), with the assistance of UNDP between 1969 and 1971. The ESCAP/ITU Unit, in addition to providing specialized and advisory services to developing countries in the region, has been charged with technical backstopping and co-ordinating responsibilities in connexion with the implementation of the network. The network is expected to become operational by the end of 1980.

Over the years, other complementary systems including satellite systems and submarine cable systems have been introduced in the region. Broadly speaking, a fairly well integrated network system should have been established by 1980 with wide-band transmission capacities that could be adopted for various end-uses by the countries concerned. Thus, in addition to the traditional services of telephone, telegraph and telex, a potential would be created for data transmission, exchange of radio and television programmes etc.

ITU/UNDP are also engaged in establishing a telecommunication network linking up all the island countries of the South Pacific region.

These developments are expected to enhance considerably the economic and cultural relationships and co-operation among the regional countries.

Asia-Pacific Telecommunity

The Constitution for a proposed regional telecommunication organization or the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity, was approved by the Commission at its thirty-second session in 1976.

This organization is expected to be established in early 1979. It would provide a forum to all participating countries to deal with common problems relating to telecommunication matters of mutual interest. Thailand has offered Bangkok as the headquarters for the Telecommunity.

The Constitution has been ratified by Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Burma, China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Singapore.

Under the provision relating to its entry into force, the Constitution will come into effect after a minimum of seven countries including Thailand, have ratified or accepted it.

Ministerial Conference on Co-operation in Trade in Asia and the Pacific

The Ministerial Conference on Co-operation in Trade in Asia and the Pacific region was held from 21 to 23 August 1978 in New Delhi. A broad based programme for regional trade expansion and co-operation in the ESCAP region was approved.

The ministers recommended setting up a trade information network linked to ESCAP. They approved a programme for the promotion of trade-creating joint ventures among member countries. It will also provide assistance to existing commodity communities and promotion of new communities/associations for commodities of interest to the countries of the region.

Improvement of monetary and credit co-operation, encouragement and liberalization of trade within the region, and harmonization of trade statistics, customs tariff nomenclature were also recommended.

The Ministerial Conference decided to constitute a trade co-operation group which would serve as a forum to consider how to give effect to programmes based on measures it approved.

It also recommended that while implementing various measures, the special needs of the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries should receive particular attention.

Bangkok Agreement

As a measure to expand trade among the developing Asian countries, the Bangkok Agreement was concluded in July 1975 and came into force on 17 June 1976. The Agreement, now ratified by five countries, offers tariff cuts averaging 36 per cent on 146 selected products. The participating States are Bangladesh, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka.

The Agreement grew out of several years of negotiation conducted by the ESCAP Trade Negotiations Group under the Asian Trade Expansion Programme.

Multilateral trade negotiations project

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)/ ESCAP regional project on the multilateral trade negotiations was established in 1974 to provide technical assistance to developing countries of the region to enable them to prepare effectively for participation in the multilateral trade negotiations (MTN) under General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The project provides technical and advisory services for Governments and organizes seminars on the more complex and technical issues. These cover various areas of the trade negotiations, namely, tariffs; non-tariff barriers, including quantitative restrictions, subsidies and countervailing duties, standards and other technical barriers to trade and customs matters; sector approach; agriculture; and tropical products. Its activities also involve the collection and analysis of statistical and other data, and preparation of technical studies on the various issues and problems involved in the context of these negotiations.

ESCAP Trade Promotion Centre

The ESCAP Trade Promotion Centre (TPC) is a regional Centre to promote the development and expansion of trade of the countries of the region. It functions as a servicing institution for the needs of the member countries in trade promotion and in improving their personnel, machinery, techniques and procedures. It also assists member countries to improve their trade-information and documentation, and market and product development. The Trade Promotion Centre has four services, namely: the Trade Information Service (TIS), to develop an efficient programme of trade information (through this service, 21 national trade information units in the ESCAP region are now harmoniously linked up); the Professional Development Service (PDS) provides training courses, seminars and workshops, relating to export promotion and development; the Market/Product Development Service (MDS); and Trade Promotion Advisory Services (TAS) on marketing techniques, marketing research, organization and strengthening of commercial representation abroad. TAS also assists in the plan-

ning, organization and operation of commodity control boards and marketing boards, export and import procedures and legislation, operation of duty-free zone, quality control and packaging, co-operative marketing, and marketing of agricultural products.

Asian Clearing Union

ESCAP's efforts at promoting regional monetary co-operation resulted in the establishment of the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) in December 1974. The Union, which began operations on 1 November 1975, was the outcome of the ESCAP-sponsored Fourth Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Co-operation, held at Kabul, Afghanistan, in December 1970.

Membership in the Union has grown to seven central banks; the last to join was the Union of Burma Bank in January 1977. Other members are the central banks of Bangladesh, India, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The ACU is intended to provide a facility for the settlement of payments for current international transactions between participants on a multilateral basis. The Union also promotes use of participants' currencies in transactions between member countries, thereby conserving foreign exchange. In addition, the Union aims at promoting monetary co-operation among the participants and closer relations among the banking systems in their territories and thereby contribute to the expansion of trade and economic activity among the countries of the ESCAP region.

The value of transactions channelled through ACU increased from AMUs (Asian Monetary Units) 22.3 million in 1976 to AMUs 68.0 million in 1977. One AMU is equivalent to a special drawing right allocated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The ESCAP Committee on Trade has expressed the hope that more countries will soon join the Union and that it may pave the way for the establishment of an Asian reserve bank in the future.

Asian Reinsurance Corporation

The establishment of an Asian Reinsurance Corporation is another ESCAP effort to conserve foreign exchange. ESCAP estimated that, in 10 major developing regional countries alone, $US 200 million left the area in the form of reinsurance to developed countries in 1974. The Asian Reinsurance Corporation is expected to be inaugurated in 1979. So far, eight countries have signed the Agreement establishing the Corporation. They are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.



Shipping and Port -- Klong Toey, Bangkok

According to the Agreement, member countries will direct all insurance and reinsurance institutions operating in their countries to cede to the Corporation 5 per cent of all their outward reinsurance treaties, or $US 500,000 of acceptable reinsurance premiums, whichever amount is less. Reinsurance ceded to the Corporation will be made on the best terms and conditions as accorded in these treaties.

After a certain period of time and some experience is gained, the Corporation will underwrite a substantial amount of reinsurance business from the international markets and thus gain foreign exchange for the region. This gain will be in addition to savings made from retaining reinsurance business in the region.

Shipping, ports and inland waterways

The ESCAP's maritime development programme assists developing member countries in acquiring knowledge and skills for the proper analysis and evaluation of shipping services and in building up a healthy and strong network of maritime information systems and institutions, such as freight study units, shippers' councils and cargo-booking and consolidation centres.

Its maritime manpower development project assists the developing countries in upgrading the training of merchant navy personnel, such as marine engineers,



Assistance to Land-Locked Countries — to help improve unfavourable conditions including transportation

deck and radio officers, and in establishing subregional and regional centres for merchant navy training. It also helps in the development of the expertise of senior officers of member Governments by conducting workshops, study tours and seminars; and in the preparation of guidebooks and manuals.

Its recent emphasis on its merchant fleet development project seeks to help the developing countries in the organization of government-assisted and national shipping companies, and in the selection of fleets, routes and operation of liner and charter shipping services through its information system, research and surveys. It supports subregional and regional co-operation by encouraging shipowners to co-operate on regional and subregional projects. It also maintains close liaison with the national promoters of such projects.

ESCAP's ship-users' co-operation project which is in its third phase assists the executive officers of ship-users organizations in the developing countries to acquire the expertise required for the evaluation of shipping services and negotiations with the shipowners, by organizing training courses, workshops and study tours and preparing manuals and guidebooks.

Further, its projects for the development of ports and inland waterways in the developing countries assist in the improvement of port management, and in the fuller

exploitation of the transport potentials of the inland waterways in developing countries.

The ESCAP's maritime development programme is receiving substantial support from developed maritime countries, such as Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and the USSR.

Regional Mineral Resources Development Centre

This regional body was established in October 1973 to assist the countries of the region in strengthening and increasing the scope of the national agencies responsible for geological investigations and mineral resources development. Pending its transfer to Bandung, Indonesia, it has been operating from Bangkok, rendering technical services to national projects in the region.

In the past five years, more than 70 advisory missions to 20 member States have been carried out by the specialists of the Centre.

One of the immediate tasks of the Centre, in addition to the advisory services rendered by the specialists, is to assist in the establishment of regional specialized laboratories, such as age-dating centres, and in organizing intercountry air-borne geophysical surveys.

The staff of the Centre is expected to be expanded in the near future to allow the Centre to help explore and exploit mineral resources, including ground water.

At its 1978 session, the Commission elected the first Governing Council of the Centre for a period ending at the thirty-sixth session of the Commission in 1980. The Council is composed of Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand.

The first Governing Council session was held in September 1978.

Transnational Corporations

During the past three decades, there has been an enormous expansion and diversification in the range and scope of transnational corporations (TNC's) operating in the developing countries. With the financial, managerial and techno-

logical services available to the transnational corporations, they have become a growingly important element in development. The major problem has been to reconcile the priorities and practices of these corporations with those of national Governments so as to promote a deployment of resources for mutually beneficial purposes. However, the drawback has been the relatively favourable bargaining strength of the transnational corporations against that of individual developing countries.

Considering the important role of these corporations and the need to improve the bargaining position of the developing countries, the United Nations set up the Commission on Transnational Corporations (CTC). The Commission is serviced, at the regional level, by Joint Units established by CTC and the regional Commissions.

The CTC/ESCAP Joint Unit on Transnational Corporations was established in 1977 and undertakes the following functions:

On research, on-going programmes include in-depth studies of the role of transnational corporations in important sectors such as banking, food and beverages, tourism, the shipping industry, the rubber industry, the pineapple industry, the consumer electronics industry and an analysis of the legal agreements for specific copper and aluminium projects. In collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Economic Commission for Africa, an interregional research project is under way on the role of transnational corporations in primary exports such as tin, rubber, bananas, pineapples, copper and bauxite. An interregional seminar to assess the case studies under the research project will be undertaken.

The Joint Unit is collaborating with CTC in the collection, analysis and dissemination of information relating to these corporations operating in Asia. Liaison is being maintained with research institutes, universities, boards of investment and chambers of commerce on exchange of information. Member countries of ESCAP can, through the Joint Unit, avail themselves of the information system being established at New York which includes corporate profiles, legal contracts and agreements, etc.

To increase the negotiating capacity of developing countries, technical assistance is provided on request.

Two high-level seminars were held in 1978, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Pattaya, Thailand, respectively, to determine the training needs of member countries in negotiations with transnational corporations.



Agricultural Machinery Development – a small harvester demonstration in a village in the Philippines

Finally, the Joint Unit assists CTC in the formulation of a Code of Conduct for Transnational Corporations.

Asian Development Bank

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) was established in 1966 as a result of ESCAP's initiative, to foster economic co-operation and the harmonious economic growth of the region.

Membership in the Bank is open to members and associate members of ESCAP, to other countries in the region and to non-regional developed countries which are members of the United Nations or of any of its specialized agencies. In accordance with its Charter, the Bank co-operates closely with the United Nations.

Agricultural Requisites Scheme for Asia and the Pacific (ARSAP)

The first phase of this scheme dealing with the domestic marketing and consumption of chemical fertilizer was started in 1975 and completed in July/August 1978 with assistance from the Netherlands. Efforts are being made to activate the



Asian Population Programme – population and family welfare programme in Burma

ESCAP/FAO/UNIDO Fertilizer Advisory, Development and Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (FADINAP) in order to continue and expand the activities and functions for which ARSAP had prepared the ground.

In July/August 1978, the ARSAP team embarked on a second phase of 30 months dealing with agro-pesticides, with assistance from the Netherlands. The existing team is being strengthened with additional specialists. One of the objectives is to develop a regional economic survey and information service regarding the use of agro-pesticides in the developing countries of the region. The other major goal under this phase is to develop a regional programme for training in pesticides retail distribution in developing ESCAP member countries, aimed at upgrading the knowledge and skills of retailers in order to achieve a more efficient and safer application of pesticides by small farmers.

Agricultural Information Schemes and Outlook Services

As part of its project entitled Information Schemes and Outlook Services, ESCAP has published a periodical called *Agricultural Information Development Bulletin.* The first (experimental) issue was published in July 1977. It is planned to continue its publication in future as a quarterly with a view to bridging the gap in information relating to food and agriculture development in the region.

Centre for coarse grains, pulses, roots and tuber (CGPRT) crops

To increase production, income and employment from so far neglected crops such as maize, beans, tapioca and sweet potatoes, the Commission, in April 1977, approved the establishment of a regional co-ordination centre for research and development of coarse grains, pulses, roots and tubers in the humid tropics of Asia and the Pacific. The 1978 Commission session welcomed the offer by the Government of Indonesia to provide host facilities for the Centre at Bogor and preparatory work is being conducted.

Population and social development programmes of ESCAP

The Asian and Pacific Population Programme was adopted by the Commission in 1968 to provide analysis and in-depth consideration of the region's population problems and for the application of the most effective means of solving those problems through regional co-operation. ESCAP works in close collaboration with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) in implementing this programme.

The programme is focused on (a) country and inter-country studies on demography and fertility, in management and communication aspects of family planning and population problems related to development; (b) training programmes; and (c) technical assistance and advisory services to Governments on population and development questions, and in the development of population policies, family planning programmes, and population information programmes, including networks. Studies and reports are issued regularly as part of the Asian and Pacific Population Studies Series.

To assist member Governments, ESCAP has also established a Clearing-house and Information Service, which includes the regional Reference Centre. It undertakes information research and issues regular publications, such as *Asian Population Programme News, Population Headliners, ADOPT,* a monthly service on new publications, and *Population Research Leads,* a series of semi-technical information pamphlets.

The social development activities of ESCAP include the provision of technical co-operation activities and advisory services in the fields of the integration of women in the development process, people's participation and institution building, youth development, social welfare policy and programmes, social work education and related activities. A Mobile Training Scheme (MTS) is assisting Governments of land-locked and least developed countries in the region in training their trainers and supervisors of field-level workers, particularly those in the rural areas.

The 1978 Commission session endorsed the holding of a Second Asian Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Development (including social welfare) in 1980 and requested that a preparatory expert group meeting be held in 1979.

ESCAP produces the *Social Work Education and Development Newsletter,* which gives a regional picture of social work and community development education, social welfare activities, institutions and individuals in social development.

A regional consultation meeting on the International Year of the Child was convened in Manila, the Philippines, in November/December 1978.

Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific

One of the more important activities of ESCAP is to supply vital information concerning economic and social development. The *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* is a comprehensive perennial analysis concerning the countries of the region, published by the United Nations. The form of this publication alternates between a "biennial review", in which the progress of all the member countries over the preceding two years is reviewed, and a survey concentrating on a specific problem of development confronting those countries. In 1975, the special topic chosen concerned the small farmer and the prospects for improving his lot through the absorption of basic technologies, and institutional reform. In 1977, ESCAP carried out a detailed analysis of the impact on the developing ESCAP economies of the international economic crises that began with the sharp changes in the world commodity prices in 1973. The purpose of the study is not only retrospective: it is also intended to enlighten member Governments on how steps can be taken in the future to reduce their economic vulnerability to external fluctuations.

ESCAP is also engaged in a project on new patterns and strategies of development in the ESCAP region for the 1980s with financial support from the Governments of Japan and the Netherlands.

Under the project, a series of country studies have been commissioned to review and appraise development and identify anticipated problems in the 1980s.

Studies have also been made on food supply, public enterprises, international trade, aid and investment (including the role of transnational corporations) and problems of under-utilization of human resources such as rural manpowers.

SUBREGIONAL CO-OPERATION

Committee for Co-ordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin

In 1957, following several years of intensive, preparatory work by ESCAP (formerly known as ECAFE), the Governments of Democratic Kampuchea (formerly known as Cambodia), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (formerly known as Laos), Thailand and Viet Nam (formerly known as the Republic of Viet-Nam) established the Committee for Co-ordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin. The Committee's goal is the comprehensive development of the water resources and related resources of the basin, including mainstream and tributaries, for hydroelectric power, irrigation, flood control, drainage, navigation improvement, watershed management, water supply and related development for the benefit of all the people of the basin.

Among the many concrete achievements sponsored by the Committee were the construction of ten tributary projects, including the Nam Ngum Dam in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Nam Pong Dam in Thailand. A major extension of the Nam Ngum project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic was completed in 1978.

The Committee Secretariat is carrying out many pre-investment studies and investigations in preparation for the construction of several other tributary projects and, later on, mainstream projects as well.

ESCAP has stood by the Committee in maintaining its activities during the most difficult times, including periods of armed conflict in the area.

The Committee is now functioning as an Interim Committee as a result of an agreement in January 1978 between the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam, pending the renewed participation of Democratic Kampuchea.

The Interim Committee at its first meeting in Hanoi (22 to 24 February 1978) approved its work programme for 1978. Initially, pledges were needed in cash and kind, of the order of $US 50 million. Since then, the Committee has held two more meetings, and additional projects were added to the work programme.

As at 31 December 1978, the cumulative total of resources contributed, pledged or likely to be available to the Mekong development scheme generally or to specific projects sponsored by the Committee stood at the equivalent of $US 383 million, representing an increase of over $US 23 million during the year.



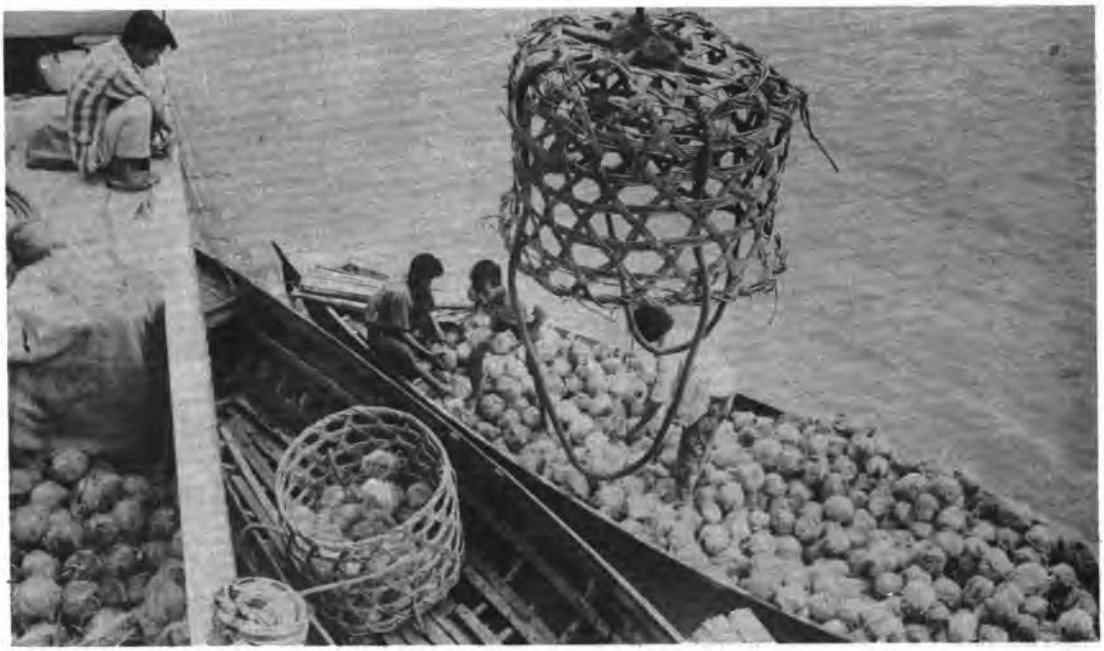
Nong Khai lies partially submerged by Mekong floodwater

Countries which have co-operated with the Mekong Committee are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Committee for Co-ordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in Asian Offshore Areas (CCOP)

CCOP, an intergovernmental body, was established by the member Governments under the auspices of ESCAP in 1966. At present, its members are Democratic Kampuchea, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and Viet Nam. This project has been receiving institutional support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) from March 1972.

UNDP, in 1978 approved about $US 3 million, of which $US 934,400 is from its own funds and $US 2 million is from the Special Fund of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), for the new phase of the project which continues up to 1981.



Coconut Community – loading coconut in Thailand

Its primary objectives are to help member States to: (1) increase the scientific and technical knowledge on the mineral potential of near-shore, off-shore and adjoining oceanic areas in east Asia; (2) augment the capabilities of the developing member countries to carry out their off-shore survey activities; and (3) promote interest in developing the off-shore mineral and petroleum resources in the region. It provides consultancy and field services, issues technical publications, arranges for bilateral and multilateral assistance, co-ordinates joint surveys and research programmes, disseminates technical information to member Governments, arranges for training of member country personnel, and promotes technical co-operation among the developing member countries.

CCOP co-operating countries make cash contributions, provide services of technical advisers and in other ways assist CCOP and the member countries. The co-operating countries are Australia, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

After twelve years of activities on offshore petroleum and mineral development in the region, CCOP has made tangible contributions to the member countries through: (1) the stimulation and acceleration of exploration and development of off-

shore petroleum and mineral resources; (2) improved knowledge and technical skills of staff and workers; and (3) increased revenues from production bonuses, royalties and exploration permits.

Committee for Co-ordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in South Pacific Offshore Areas (CCOP/SOPAC)

CCOP/SOPAC was established under the sponsorship of ESCAP in 1972. Its present members are the Cook Islands, Fiji, the Gilbert Islands, New Hebrides, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Its primary objectives are to investigate and promote interest in the potential off-shore, near-shore and on-shore mineral resources of the developing South Pacific island countries, to assist the countries develop their capabilities in these fields and to foster technical co-operation among the developing countries.

In 1977 and 1978 off-shore surveys were carried out in the waters of some member countries with ships, personnel and facilities provided by member countries and by a vessel chartered by the United Nations Development Programme. On-the-job and class-room training courses have been conducted for trainees from member countries and a number of technical reports have been published.

UNDP in 1978 approved a new project for the period 1979 to 1981 which involves an expenditure of about $ 2.5 million. Recruitment of personnel has started and plans for the new project are being prepared.

Co-operating countries make contributions, donations and loans of equipment and provide various forms of technical assistance. As of 1978, they are Australia, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Norway, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Typhoon Committee

The Committee was established jointly by ESCAP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1968. It is an intergovernmental body composed of China, Democratic Kampuchea, Hong Kong, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. The Typhoon Committee secretariat has its headquarters at Quezon City in the Philippines.

Typhoons have for centuries ravaged the eastern part of Asia, leaving untold damage in their wake. The main objectives of the Committee are to improve meteorological observations and telecommunication facilities, particularly those relevant to

typhoon detection, forecasting and warning; prevent or minimize flood damage through the adoption of appropriate measures, including the establishment of pilot flood forecasting and warning systems in river basins prone to flooding; and initiate and promote disaster prevention and preparedness measures.

WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones

The Panel was established jointly by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and ESCAP in 1972. Its membership comprises Bangladesh, Burma, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Its Technical Support Unit has its headquarters at New Delhi in India.

The objective of the Panel is to minimize damage caused by cyclones, associated floods and storm surges originating from the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea through the improvement of meteorological and hydrological facilities for cyclone, flood and storm surge detection; forecasting and warning and through the promotion of disaster prevention and preparedness measures.

United Nations Development Advisory Team — South Pacific

In 1971, multinational interdisciplinary United Nations Development Advisory Teams, popularly known as UNDATs, were established. ESCAP has been the executing agency for the South Pacific Team since January 1977. It gives advice to Governments in areas such as economic and social planning; town and country planning, including environmental and tourism development; improvement of statistical data; and provides special short-term consultancy services.

The South Pacific UNDAT is a team of United Nations experts and consultants stationed at Suva, Fiji, whose services are available on government request, free of direct expense, to any island nations or territories (whether independent or not) mainly in the South Pacific region.

The South Pacific UNDAT has already extended services to American Samoa, the Cook Islands, Fiji, the Gilbert Islands, Guam, the New Hebrides, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and Tuvalu. It has also co-operated with such regional organizations as the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Co-operation (SPEC), the South Pacific Commission (SPC) and the University of the South Pacific (USP).

The developed countries in the region, such as Australia and New Zealand, are giving strong support to the programme. The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States have also supported the South Pacific UNDAT.

Lumbini development

The thirty-fourth session of the Commission approved a resolution sponsored by Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand, which gives support to the restoration and development of the site of the Lord Buddha's birthplace at Lumbini in Nepal.

UNDP is assisting in the physical designing of the Master Plan for the restoration and development of Lumbini.

The site is one of four places sacred to the world's millions of Buddhists and a detailed plan has already been completed which will transform the area into a pilgrimage centre.

The ESCAP resolution calls upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to assign a specific task to ESCAP for the Lumbini development project and also urges ESCAP member nations to support the project both financially and otherwise. An international fund raising campaign is expected to be launched to raise $US 20 million.

CO-OPERATION TO SOLVE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

PROMOTION OF COMMODITY GROUPS

Asian and Pacific Coconut Community

The Asian and Pacific Coconut Community is the first association of Asian producers organized on a commodity basis. Millions of Asians depend on the coconut industry, which faces possible extinction unless positive action is taken to solve a wide range of problems. The Asian and Pacific Coconut Community was inaugurated in September 1969 under the auspices of ESCAP. Its secretariat is in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Its members are the major coconut-producing countries of the region: India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Pepper Community

The Pepper Community was established in 1972 under the auspices of ESCAP, with India, Indonesia and Malaysia as its members.

The objectives of the Community are to stimulate research, seek removal of trade barriers, co-ordinate standards and facilitate the flow of information. Its secretariat is situated in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries

The region's main rubber-producing countries account for more than 85 per cent of the world production of natural rubber. ESCAP assisted with the establishment of the Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries. The Agreement forming the Association came into force in October 1970 with objectives similar to those of the coconut and pepper communities. Its members are India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The Association is based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Southeast Asia Tin Research and Development Centre

The Centre was established early in 1977 and is located at Ipoh, Malaysia. Its principal aim is to promote, co-ordinate and harmonize all activities relating to the development of the tin industry in the participating countries – Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. These three countries account for 65 per cent of the world's production of tin concentrates.

The ESCAP region produces over two thirds of the world's output of tin concentrates. In view of the importance of tin to the economies of the participating countries, the Centre is expected to contribute substantially towards the attainment of their various development objectives.

Land-locked developing countries

The land-locked developing countries in Asia are Afghanistan, Bhutan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and Nepal. Most of these countries are considered among the least developed among the developing countries in the world. Their problems of development have been further compounded by the fact that they have no access to the sea; therefore, transport of imports and exports entails additional costs.

ESCAP, at its 1976 session and again in 1977, adopted resolutions on special measures for the least developed land-locked countries. It called upon its member countries to give special attention to the trade requirements of the least developed land-locked countries and to provide the necessary assistance through practical measures to facilitate free access to and from the sea and alleviate their transit difficulties.

In 1975, UNCTAD and ESCAP launched a project on assistance to least developed land-locked countries in the ESCAP region. During the first phase of the project, considerable preliminary work was done in examining transit costs, procedures, systems, trade statistics, improved utilization of existing facilities, and transport

potential, including air transport. The first workshop for the land-locked countries was organized in August 1975. Subsequently, two more workshops were organized in 1977 and 1978.

The project has now entered its second phase, and the emphasis is on transit operations and joint co-operation. Under the project, a regional office has been set up in Kabul, Afghanistan headed by a transport transit expert. A similar office will be set up in Kathmandu, Nepal early in 1979. Short-term consultants are also engaged to carry out specific activities under the project.

ESCAP has also set up a Special Body on Land-locked Countries, an intergovernmental body which meets every two years to review the progress in the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the United Nations system in favour of these countries and to suggest measures for further action. The fourth meeting of the Special Body was held in October 1977.

A special Unit has been functioning in the secretariat since 1970 to provide continuous attention to the special problems of the land-locked and island developing countries and to co-ordinate the activities of the secretariat in this field.

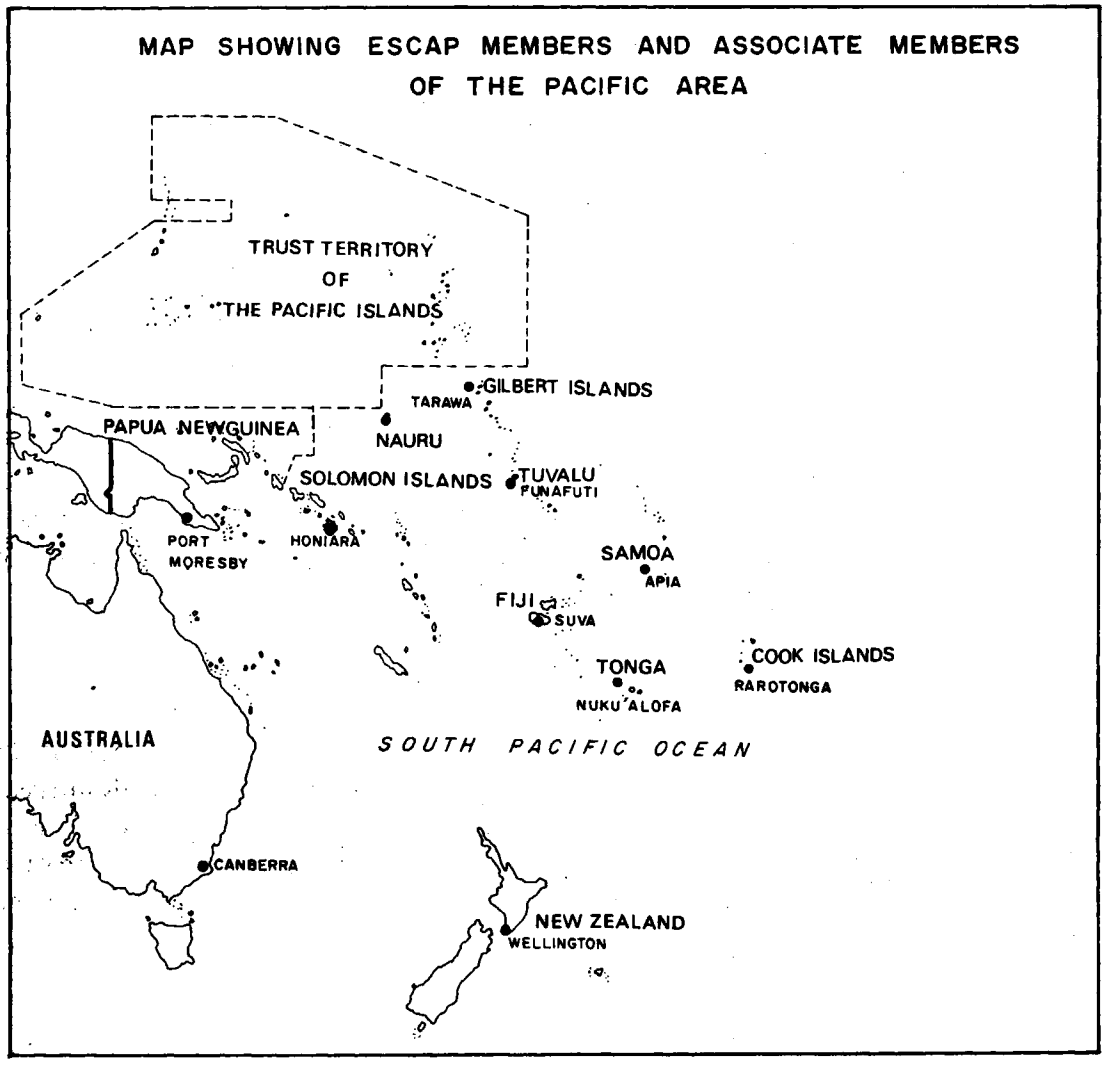
Developing island countries in the South Pacific

There are more than 10 developing island States and territories in the ESCAP South Pacific subregion, all of which may be regarded as geographically disadvantaged. They are the Cook Islands, Fiji, the Gilbert Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and Tuvalu. Maldives in the Indian Ocean is also included in the ESCAP list of island developing countries.

The subregion covers over 9,600 km (6,000 miles) from east to west and some 4,800 km (3,000 miles) from north to south. The countries are widely dispersed within this area and some of the individual countries consist of many islands which may themselves be spread over 4,480 km (2,800 miles) of sea from east to west.

All such countries are subject to certain constraints which deny them opportunities for economic growth. The problems include small internal markets; dependence on overseas finance and expertise; dependence on a few major product items and commodities (e.g., sugar, copra, cocoa, timber, citrus etc.); geographical isolation and remoteness; and difficulty in taking initiatives to create an appropriate economic climate to improve the general living standard of the people.

At the regional level, ESCAP is co-ordinating United Nations efforts to assist



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement of acceptance by the United Nations

these countries in the economic field. ESCAP is also responsible for the United Nations Development Advisory Team which assists these countries.

In an endeavour to assist the developing island countries, ESCAP, in co-operation with the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre and the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Co-operation (SPEC), has developed a training programme in trade promotion, launched in March/April 1978 in the Cook Islands, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, with additional participants from Niue, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Samoa. This programme was financed by the Governments of Australia and New

Zealand. A similar programme is expected to be organized for Maldives and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Pacific countries

During the 1978 Commission session, calls were made by both developed and developing countries of the Pacific for greater attention to the developing island countries of the region.

The adopted resolution calls for the establishment of a liaison office which will strengthen the link between ESCAP and the Pacific by assisting the Executive Secretary in programming and implementing ESCAP activities in the area.

The resolution also asks that the number of ESCAP staff members from the developing Pacific nations be increased in order to improve the area's representation in the secretariat.

DEVELOPMENT TRAINING AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

There are five regional institutions affiliated to ESCAP engaged in development training and research: the Asian and Pacific Development Institute (APDI), at Bangkok; the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), at Tokyo; the Asian and Pacific Development Administration Centre (APDAC), at Kuala Lumpur; the Social Welfare and Development Centre for Asia and the Pacific (SWDCAP), at Manila; and the Asia and Pacific Centre for Women and Development (APCWD), at Tehran.

All these institutions were established by decisions of the Commission. The Commission has also elected a single Governing Council (since 1977) to direct and monitor these institutions. The United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), located at Nagoya, Japan, which was established by an agreement between the Government of Japan and the United Nations, works in close collaboration with the five institutions.

Asian and Pacific Development Institute

The United Nations Asian and Pacific Development Institute was established in 1964 as the United Nations Asian Institute for Economic Development and Planning to perform the functions of research and training and to provide advisory services to the countries in the ESCAP region.

During the 15 years of existence, over 3,700 persons have participated in the Institute's training activities and consultative meetings. The Institute presently conducts about 20 training activities and six consultative meetings annually. Most of these activities are organized in collaboration with national institutions in the region.

The Institute's objectives are to promote the sharing of experience among countries of the region, and assist in institutional building in research and training for development planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at regional, subregional, country and subnational levels. The major programme areas are rural development, least developed and land-locked countries, island countries, urban development, population, environment, women and children, local-level planning, project planning, monitoring and evaluation and subregional co-operation.

Assistance from UNDP, Governments and extra-budgetary resources amounted to $US 1.5 million in 1977 to carry out the work programme of the Institute.

Asian and Pacific Development Administration Centre

The Asian and Pacific Development Administration Centre was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1973. The Centre assists developing member countries in improving their administrative and institutional capabilities to meet current and future development needs. To achieve these objectives, the Centre undertakes research and comparative studies on administrative problems related to social and economic development; organizes meetings, seminars and study courses for senior administrators of member countries; organizes the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on development administration and related topics; and provides advisory and consultancy services on request to member countries.

The Centre also conducts programmes on performance evaluation and improvement in public enterprises, managerial and employee motivation in public enterprises, financial management of public enterprises and the use of modern management systems and techniques in public enterprises management.

It also conducts research with regard to the role of rural institutions in rural development and agrarian reform administration and on major administrative innovation in poverty-focused programmes.

From its inception in mid-1973 up to 1977, the Centre had 1,304 participants in its programmes, conducted at the regional and national levels. During that period, the Centre issued 14 publications on such subjects as rural development, public enterprise, management of family planning programmes, budgeting and management consultancy.

Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

The Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific was established in 1969 and formally inaugurated in June 1970. It assists the member countries of the region in improving their statistical capability to serve the requirements of social and economic development. The Institute conducts a general course of six months' duration, which is intended to update their skills in a manner relevant to the changing demands made on the national statistical services by government planning and development agencies.

The Institute also conducts two advanced courses each year on special aspects of statistical development. In the past years, these courses, which are meant for experienced, senior statisticians, have covered such subjects as agricultural data collection methods; conduct of sample surveys; national accounting statistics; planning, design and organization of population censuses; tabulations and analytical processing of population census data; statistics of distribution; and statistics required for development planning.

Since 1972, the Institute has also conducted country and subregional courses on subject areas agreed to with the Governments concerned. Such country courses, which have become more numerous in recent years, have been conducted in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Since 1970, the general course, the advanced courses and the country courses have been attended by over 800 participants from 30 countries.

Social Welfare and Development Centre for Asia and the Pacific

The Social Welfare and Development Centre for Asia and the Pacific started operations in June 1976. It provides assistance to member Governments in formulating and implementing new development strategies in social welfare and developing the necessary manpower.

These objectives are to be achieved by training senior and key personnel in the countries, serving as the focal point of an information dissemination system, and through research activities to support both the training and information dissemination activities.

In the area of training, the Centre has so far conducted a programme on policy formulation for social welfare, and two subregional workshops on innovative, non-formal education/social welfare strategies, and on methods and materials for working within poverty groups. It also co-sponsored with ESCAP the organization of a regional

workshop on methods and techniques for promoting people's participation in local development.

The Centre organized a total of eight training and research activities in four countries of the region.

A total of 176 participants in the training activities of the Centre had come from 14 countries of the region. In 1977, major emphasis had been placed on organizing practitioner-oriented training activities for social welfare and development personnel on new strategies for improving the living conditions of the poorest of the poor.

Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development

The Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development was established in November 1976 and began operations in February 1977. Its long-term objective is to ensure that women are effective participants in the process of development as well as its beneficiaries.

The Centre has begun to establish a planning and monitoring system both to monitor and to evaluate the changing conditions of women. A programme of information collection and dissemination has also been started. In addition, advisory services are being provided, particularly in ensuring that the formulation of country development plans takes into account adequately the needs and desires of women. The first such advisory services have been provided for the Government of Iran. The Centre has also conducted its first country training programme for the training of trainers in leadership skills.

During its initial year, the Centre was able to carry out two country courses, design a training manual for rural aides, and prepare a course outline for the literacy corps and sponsor four case studies. It also held an expert group meeting on the identification of the critical needs of women in the region. In co-operation with APDI it organized a training course on techniques of participation of women in the process of development.

DID YOU KNOW.....

- ESCAP was founded on 28 March 1947.
- Its first session was held at Shanghai, China, from 16 to 25 June 1947. The participants were Australia, China, France, India, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Thailand, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. These 10 countries became the original members.
- ESCAP now has 35 members and 6 associate members.
- The ESCAP region covers a land area of about 31 million square kilometres with a population of 2,284 million.
- Headquarters were moved to Bangkok, Thailand, in January 1949. Bangkok was officially declared the site of ESCAP's headquarters on 16 July 1970.
- The new United Nations Building, which houses the headquarters of ESCAP and other United Nations offices, was inaugurated by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand on 24 October 1975.
- The regional commission changed its name from ECAFE – Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East – to ESCAP – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific – in August 1974 to reflect equal concern for both the economic and social aspects of development, and to delineate appropriately its geographical coverage.
- Its regular budget has grown from $US 529,000 in 1949 to $US 19.7 million in 1978-1979.
- ESCAP's manning table provides for 187 Professional and 361 General-Service posts, which are financed from the regular budget of the United Nations (1978-79). In addition to these employees, experts and advisers and supporting personnel paid from various technical assistance funds are working in ESCAP to assist member countries in their development programmes.
- In accordance with the United Nations Charter, ESCAP's Professional staff members – from nearly 40 countries – work as international civil servants, not as representatives of their Governments.
- Member Governments appoint representatives to represent their countries at various intergovernmental meetings organized by ESCAP. Nearly all countries appoint permanent representatives or permanent liaison officers accredited to ESCAP to deal with ESCAP matters.
- In terms of population, the largest ESCAP regional member is China (852 million) and the smallest is Tuvalu (less than 6,000).

- ESCAP has the following services for reference and information:
  - United Nations Information Service
  - ESCAP Library
  - Trade Information Services of ESCAP Trade Promotion Centre
  - Reference Centre of the Population and Social Affairs Division
  - Data and Information Service of the Staff Service for Shipping and Ports
  - Agricultural Information Scheme of the Agriculture Division.
- ESCAP's address is: United Nations Building, Rajadamnern Avenue, Bangkok 2, Thailand (Cable: ESCAP BANGKOK; Telex: ESCAP TH 2392 and ESCAP TH 2315).

MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF ESCAP

Members

* Afghanistan
* Australia
* Bangladesh
* Bhutan
* Burma
* China
* Democratic Kampuchea
* Fiji
* France
* India
* Indonesia
* Iran
* Japan
* Lao People's Democratic Republic
* Malaysia
* Maldives
* Mongolia
* Nauru
* Nepal
* Netherlands
* New Zealand
* Pakistan
* Papua New Guinea
* Philippines

  Republic of Korea
* Samoa
* Singapore
* Solomon Islands
* Sri Lanka
* Thailand

  Tonga
* Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
* United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
* United States of America
* Viet Nam

Associate Members

Brunei
Cook Islands
Gilbert Islands
Hong Kong
Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands
Tuvalu

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* Member of the United Nations.

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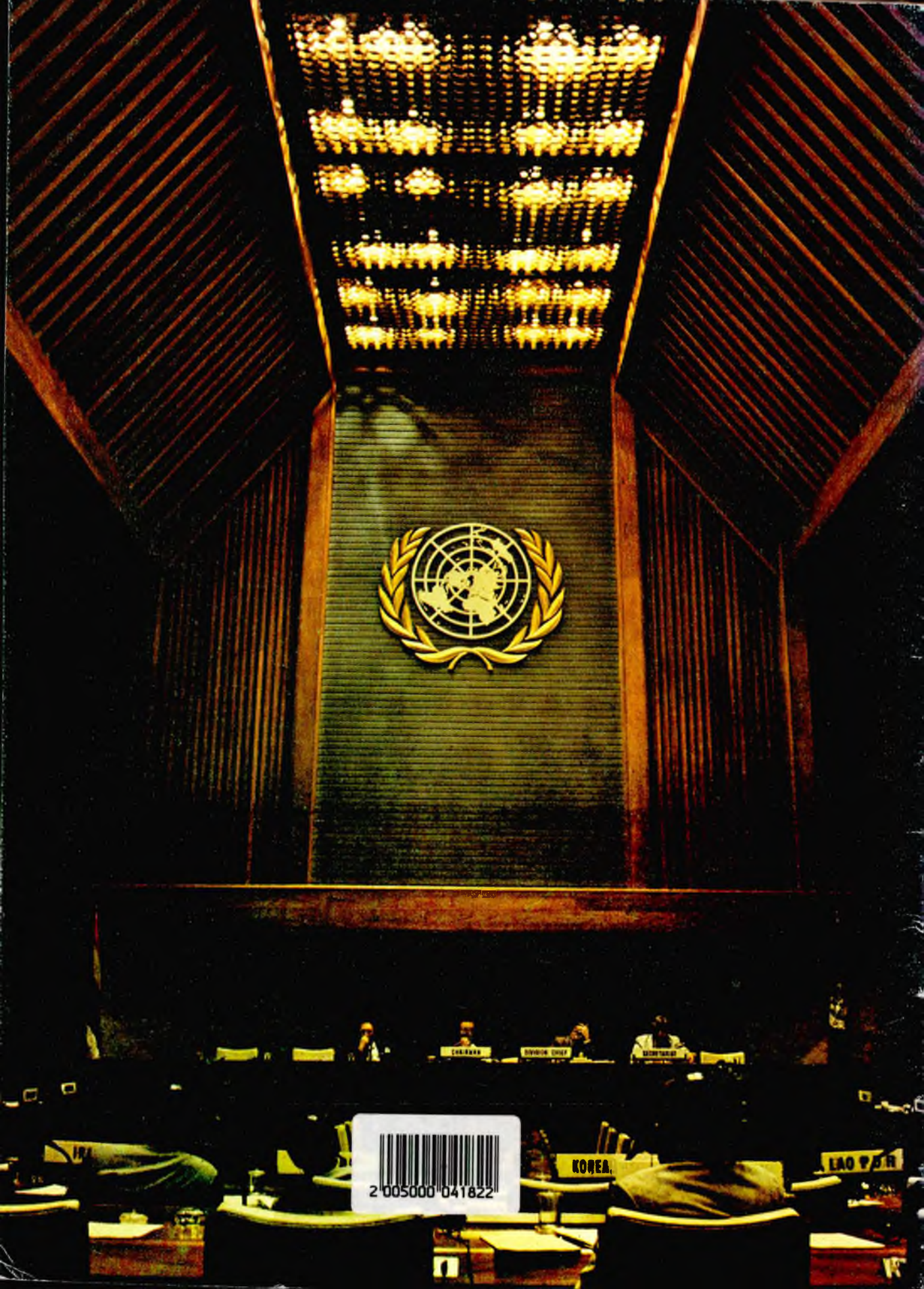
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