

SECTION 1—GENERAL

(1) The Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment was constituted by a resolution dated 18 February 1946, of the Economic and Social Council, in order to prepare the ground for an International Conference on Trade and Employment which the Council in the same resolution had called for the purpose of promoting the expansion of production, exchange, and consumption of goods. The Preparatory Committee was charged, among other tasks, with the elaboration of an annotated draft agenda, including a draft convention for consideration by the Conference after taking into account suggestions which might be submitted by the Council or by any Member of the United Nations. The Preparatory Committee was also asked to recommend the date and place of the Conference, and which States, if any, non-Members of the United Nations should be invited. The Committee comprised representatives of the Governments of the following countries: Australia, Belgium-Luxembourg, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Lebanon, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, U.S.S.R., the United States of America, and the United Kingdom.

(2) The Preparatory Committee held its First Session in London from 15 October 1946 to 26 November 1946, and, after a detailed examination and discussion on the basis of a suggested draft of a Charter which had been formulated by a technical staff within the Government of the United States of America, prepared a draft Charter which was embodied in a published Report of the Committee's work. All Members of the Committee were represented at the First Session except the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which indicated that it did not feel able to participate as it had not found it possible to devote sufficient preliminary study to the important questions which were the subject of the Committee's discussion. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics did not participate at the Second Session.

(3) Another important step taken at the First Session was the adoption by the Committee of a resolution regarding the Negotiation of a Multilateral Trade Agreement embodying Tariff Concessions. The United States Government had invited the Governments represented on the Committee to meet to negotiate arrangements for the reduction of tariffs and trade barriers. The Committee, considering that the task of the World Conference would be facilitated if reciprocal negotiations were entered into by the principal trading nations for the substantial reduction of tariffs and the elimination of preferences on a mutually advantageous basis, adopted a Resolution regarding the carrying-out of tariff negotiations under its sponsorship in connection with and as part of the Second Session.

(4) The First Session of the Preparatory Committee also appointed a Drafting Committee which was to meet as soon as possible after the end of the Session in order to edit the draft Charter adopted in