

Geographical areas were defined by the Assembly as Eastern Mediterranean, Western Pacific (which includes New Zealand), South-east Asian, European, African, and American, and the Executive Board was instructed to establish regional health organizations on receipt of the consent of a majority of the members in each area. No steps have yet been taken to establish the regional organization for the Western Pacific, but the South-east Asian organization is operating with headquarters at New Delhi.

An important function of WHO and its expert committees is co-ordination with other international organizations. The operational values of both WHO and UNICEF, for instance, have been strengthened by the work of the Joint Committee of these two organizations, which has the task of regulating all UNICEF health programmes. Thus the financial resources of UNICEF are combined with the technical competence of WHO to the advantage of children and women, particularly in Europe and the Far East, who are receiving food and other assistance from UNICEF. This co-operation covers nutrition, field operations such as anti-tuberculosis injections, and training of personnel.

On 16 February the U.S.S.R. advised the Director-General that the U.S.S.R. no longer considered itself a member of WHO. The grounds stated were that tasks connected with prevention of disease and dissemination of medical knowledge were not being accomplished satisfactorily, and expenses were too heavy for member States to bear. Similar action was taken by the Ukraine and Byelorussia. The Director-General replied that there was no provision in the WHO constitution for withdrawal and asked the three members to reconsider their position. He emphasized that WHO had accomplished much in a short period and considered it premature to express dissatisfaction with work which was only beginning. No information is at present available on further developments.

It has been decided that New Zealand should denounce the agreement of 9 December, 1907, by which the Office International d'Hygiene Publique was established. This action was envisaged in the protocol signed by participants at the 1946 International Health Conference, when it was agreed that the duties and functions of the Office should be assumed by the WHO.

5. THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)

There have been two conferences of the FAO since that at Geneva in August–September, 1947. Sir Carl Berendsen, New Zealand delegate, was Chairman of a special conference held at Washington on 6 April, 1948, at which Mr Norris E. Dodd, formerly Under-Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, was