

directing council

PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

XIX Meeting

regional committee

WORLD
HEALTH
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Agenda Item 32

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EMERGENCY SITUATION IN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR

1. Establishment of the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund

The Second Special Inter-American Conference held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in November 1965, set up the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund to extend assistance, with no political strings attached, to any Member State of the Organization of American States that is threatened by, has experienced or is undergoing any kind of emergency situation, and it recommended the Inter-American Economic and Social Council (IA-ECOSOC) to draft Statutes.

On 28 May 1968, the Council of the Organization of American States approved the Statutes of the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund, a copy of which is attached herewith, based on the draft produced by the Inter-American Economic and Social Council.

The Statutes provide for a Committee to operate the Fund, composed of the Secretary General of the OAS, the Chairman of the Inter-American Committee on the Alliance for Progress, and the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau. The duties assigned to the Committee include receiving requests for assistance from Member States, certifying their source, deciding how to comply with them, adopting appropriate measures for the purpose, and concluding agreements for the effective and rapid mobilization of the goods, services and resources available.

By a resolution adopted at the Sixth Annual Meetings of IA-ECOSOC held at Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, in June 1969, it was specified that the Fund might enter into operation at the earliest possible moment, the date of its inception to be fixed by the Council of the OAS; and the Council in its session of 22 July 1969 decided that the Fund should begin to operate as of that date. Its first activities were in conjunction with the conflict between El Salvador and Honduras, which the Committee declared to be an emergency situation, and it decided to take the measures called for in accordance with the Statutes of the Fund.

2. Summary of the action taken by the Pan American Health Organization

The Director has attended all the meetings of the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund, under the chairmanship of Mr. Galo Plaza, the Secretary General of the OAS. It was agreed from the first meeting that the Organization should coordinate assistance to both countries. In this connexion, PAHO would take charge of all matters relating to health, with special reference to technical assistance, either directly or by way of formulation of programs, and by dispatching supplies - equipment medicines and vaccines and other materials. In view of the limited resources available, it was essential to avoid duplication and at the same time to see that distribution was as closely as possible in line with needs as determined by the Governments. The Committee was informed of the generous contribution of the countries of the Continent, including drugs and other preparations for first-aid to the sick.

The Organization's consultants in Zone III, and more particularly in Honduras and El Salvador, collaborated actively with the Ministers of Health and their advisers and with the bodies set up by both Governments to coordinate action. They visited the areas affected, as members of missions for the purpose of programming the more urgent needs and those of the economic and social rehabilitation phase.

In the health field, the projects comprise action for the prevention and cure of disease, the installation of water and latrine services, repairs to a certain number of dwellings, the distribution of food to families, especially the more vulnerable groups, and to adults as an incentive to participation in community development projects. In short, they involve integrated programs for re-establishing and improving rural life side by side with the promotion of agriculture and facilities for marketing products, including roads and transport, to be undertaken by the Governments.

During the actual emergency stage, after studying the requests from both Governments and proposals by various public and private bodies in the United States and other countries of the Americas, the Organization procured medicines, vaccines and other materials for immediate dispatch through the services established by the OAS. In addition, through the PAHO Emergency Revolving Fund, at the request of the Government a million halazone tablets for water purification were sent to Honduras, and a Ped-O-Jet injector with accessories for hypodermic and intradermic injections. The Organization also approached a number of Latin American Governments with a view to obtaining vaccines, with the following results:

The Chilean Government sent 30,000 doses of anti-typhus vaccine.

The Brazilian Government sent 30,000 doses of anti-typhus vaccine, and 50,000 doses of DPT vaccine.

The Peruvian Government sent 40,000 doses of DPT vaccine.

All these were donations, and we distributed them in the two countries in response to requests from the Ministries of Health.

With our collaboration, the authorities of the two countries prepared a detailed program in which the emergency phase will run straight into the rehabilitation phase. The prevention and cure of the disease forms part of the economic and social development of the regions of both countries affected by the conflict, as already mentioned.

After visiting the southern part of Honduras bordering on El Salvador, and one of the areas in El Salvador where families coming from Honduras have been installed, the Director had an opportunity to discuss the relevant projects with the Ministers of Health and other senior officials.

In Honduras the project involves the re-establishment and intensification of medical care for 97,000 persons, the control of communicable diseases by immunization, the installation of water supplies and latrines, repairs to a number of dwellings, the construction of small slaughterhouses, vector control, the continuation of the malaria eradication campaign, and the distribution of food-stuffs as already described. The idea is that the food should come from the country's own production, supplemented by the resources of the World Food Program.

The Minister of Health approved the proposal to complete, over the rest of the year and in 1970 and with the help of national and international contributions, the first stage of a five-year plan for this population group and others entering the zone. For the long-term, i.e. rehabilitation program, it was agreed that international financing would be essential, from such sources as the Inter-American Development Bank, and we were authorized to make the necessary arrangements. The Government has requested contributions from UNICEF, WHO, PAHO and the World Food Program, as well as from the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund.

In El Salvador, the program is aimed at the 25,000 persons who have returned; it is expected that this number will increase to as many as 75,000. They are being installed in various parts of the country in accordance with the economic development plans. The objectives include immunization against the more frequent communicable diseases, maternal and child protection, basic sanitation, including housing and malaria

eradication, and the distribution of foodstuffs obtained from the World Food Program to supplement those produced within the country.

There is an urgent need to restore the mobile units used for the transport of medical practitioners, nurses and other health technicians, who have been looking after more than 770,000 inhabitants in the southern part of El Salvador. With the approval of the Minister of Health, it was agreed to draw up a five-year plan consisting of an emergency phase to be carried out over the rest of 1969 and through 1970, and a rehabilitation scheme continuing through 1974. It was calculated that external funds would be needed, and we were authorized by the Minister to approach the Inter-American Development Bank.

The Organization is contacting the Secretary General of the OAS, the President of IDB and the Regional Director of UNICEF for the purpose of coordinating advisory services and contributions so as to draw up and execute the health plan for the rehabilitation stage in both countries, which the Governments will prepare with such technical assistance as they deem appropriate. This stage will require some time before the plans are approved and operations are begun.

The emergency phase, which is already under way, may require a contribution of up to US\$100,000 for each country from the Pan American Sanitary Bureau. We must be ready for this if it should prove necessary, since the present situation does not admit of delay. The Directing Council is therefore requested to authorize an advance of this amount from the Working Capital Fund and to inform the Executive Committee at its 64th Meeting.

Annex

STATUTES OF THE INTER-AMERICAN EMERGENCY AID FUND

OBJECTIVES

Article I

In accordance with Resolution VIII of the Second Special Inter-American Conference, an Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund is created, hereinafter to be called the Fund.

Article II

The Fund is intended to supply, without considerations of a political nature, aid, which shall be exclusively social in character, in the form of food, medical equipment and medicines, or other types of material, technical, and financial assistance, both in kind and in services, to any member state of the Organization that is threatened by, has suffered from, or is in an emergency situation, whatever its origin.

COMPOSITION AND OPERATION

Article III

The Fund shall be made up of voluntary contributions by the governments of the member states or of other states, by international organizations, foundations, nongovernmental entities, or public and private enterprises, or by individuals.

Article IV

In its operations the Fund shall not interfere with international development programs or affect prices and markets of member states' export products.

Article V

The Fund shall establish relations for cooperation and coordination of resources and emergency plans with the United Nations Emergency Fund, the World Food Program of the FAO, the Pan American Health Organization, the International Red Cross, and other national and international institutions whose activities and experience may be of value in achieving its objectives in the best possible manner.

RESPONSIBILITY

Article VI

The Fund shall operate under the authority of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, which shall establish its general policy and review its operations each year on the basis of the report submitted by the Committee mentioned in the following article.

Article VII

An Inter-American Emergency Aid Committee is established to operate the Fund, composed of the Secretary General of the OAS, the Chairman of the Inter-American Committee on the Alliance for Progress, and the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau. The Executive Secretary of the IA-ECOSOC, or his representative, shall advise the Committee and shall serve as its Secretary. The Committee shall have the following authority:

- a. To receive applications for assistance submitted by affected Member States, determine whether they are in conformity with the purposes of the Fund, and decide upon the manner of granting such assistance, adopting the pertinent measures;
- b. To request Member States and other entities mentioned in Article III to make contributions required by the Fund;
- c. To receive offers and accept contributions for the attainment of its objectives;
- d. To determine, in each case, the specific mechanisms for granting aid, as expeditiously as the urgency of the situation demands;
- e. To issue its own regulations and, in general, to take whatever measures may be advisable to carry out the purposes of the Fund;
- f. To conclude agreements with Member States of the OAS, with other states, and with the organizations, entities, enterprises, and persons referred to in Article III, in order to achieve the objectives of the Fund in the best way possible and, in particular, to expedite the efficient and rapid mobilization of available goods, services, and resources;

- g. To provide the technical assistance necessary for the preparation of national preemergency plans.

The agreement of two members of the Committee or, in their absence, of their representatives, shall be sufficient to render decisions of the Committee valid.

Article VIII

The Secretary General of the OAS shall be responsible for carrying out the decisions of the Inter-American Emergency Aid Committee and for this purpose he may call upon the services of specialists in such matters. He shall receive the contributions of donors and establish in the General Secretariat the machinery required for the operation of the Fund and the corresponding procedures.

Article IX

The Fund shall request the Government of each Member State to appoint an official or agency to coordinate the participation of that country in the Fund. Whenever possible, this agency or authority shall be the same one entrusted by the Government with the responsibility for plans to remedy national emergencies and for receiving external aid in such cases. These appointments shall be communicated to the Secretary General within sixty days of the approval of the present Statutes.

Article X

Whenever necessary, the regional offices of the Pan American Union shall provide the Inter-American Emergency Aid Committee with assistance in all matters related to their services, facilities, and connections with local agencies for the rapid channeling, in case of emergency, of aid of all kinds that needs to be provided to a particular country. These offices shall serve as local bases for the activities of the Fund.

FINANCING

Article XI

Contributions to the Fund shall include primarily goods and services that may be offered by donor countries for use in case of an emergency.

Contributions in cash or pledges of contributions in cash shall be entered in special accounts or books kept for the purpose by the

General Secretariat, which shall administer them in accordance with the corresponding regulations.

Article XII

Administrative expenses incurred by the General Secretariat in connection with the operation of the Fund shall be covered, as far as possible, from existing resources. The operating costs of emergency missions shall be paid out of the contributions to the Fund or from Technical Assistance resources available to the Secretariat in accordance with its regular budget or the budget of the Special Development Assistance Fund. The Committee mentioned in Article VII is empowered to analyze the financial aspects of the operation of the Fund and submit any recommendations it may deem pertinent to the Inter-American Economic and Social Council.

AMENDMENT OF THE STATUTES

Article XIII

Member States may propose amendments to the present Statutes, for approval, to the Inter-American Economic and Social Council at its annual meetings. The Inter-American Committee on the Alliance for Progress and the Committee mentioned in Article VI may also propose amendments.

TRANSITORY

Sole Article

The Fund shall commence its operation on the date set by the Council of the Organization, after notification to the IA-ECOSOC.

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ADDENDUM
1 October 1969
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

EMERGENCY SITUATION IN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR

The Director has the honor to submit herewith a letter from Mr. Galo Plaza, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, on the emergency situation in Honduras and El Salvador.

(TRANSLATION)

30 September 1969

Dear Dr. Horwitz:

I have the honor to refer to our conversation of 29 September 1969 and to confirm that the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (PAU) is prepared to provide the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) with an amount of US\$200,000 (two hundred thousand dollars) to be shared equally between El Salvador and Honduras as a tangible expression of the collaboration of PASB with PAU in the program for the rehabilitation of those two countries.

As you know, the money made available to the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund for the rehabilitation phase is intended for the economic and social rehabilitation of the populations affected by the recent conflict so as to enable them to carry on their normal activities. In this effort in which PASB will act as the Executive Agency for a part of the rehabilitation programs which are the responsibility of the General Secretariat, PASB will accordingly be responsible for the conduct of health programs designed to ensure the greatest possible participation in the programs of the communities to be benefitted by them.

It must be pointed that the totality of the funds which the General Secretariat of the OAS is prepared to hand over to PASB must be devoted to substantive activities; that is to say, they cannot be used to cover administrative expenses.

Doctor Abraham Horwitz
Director
Pan American Sanitary Bureau
Washington, D. C.

The financial regulations applying to the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund, and in particular to funds intended for the rehabilitation program in El Salvador and Honduras require that a quarterly report on the use made of those funds be submitted to the General Secretariat of the OAS. Consequently PASB will provide the General Secretariat with detailed quarterly statements of accounts and quarterly progress reports on the programs financed with the funds in question.

If you agree, your affirmative reply to this letter and this letter itself will together constitute the agreement between PASB and the General Secretariat of the OAS on the use of these funds.

Since the General Secretariat wishes to see the rehabilitation program in the field of health in El Salvador and Honduras undertaken as soon as possible, I shall be pleased, as soon as I receive your favorable reply, to give the necessary instructions for the immediate initiation of this program.

I have the honor to be,

Sincerely yours,

(signed)

Galo Plaza
Secretary General