Resolution of 27 October 1949
(E/CN.11/218)

THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE FAR EAST

TAKING NOTE of the advantage to their economies of encouraging travel to and within the countries of Asia and the Far East;

RECALLING their great cultural heritages and the historic influences which have formed these countries; and

RECOGNIZING the need for greater international contact and understanding in the modern world;

HAVING RECEIVED AND CONSIDERED the Report of the Ad Hoc Sub-Committee on Travel (E/CN.11/205) which studied in detail the Report of the Working Group on Travel Facilities (TRA/WG/1);

APPROVES the Report of the Ad Hoc Sub-Committee on Travel; and

REQUESTS member and associate member governments to do all in their power to carry out the recommendations below:

I. RECOGNIZING the importance of co-ordinated effort in the long-term development of tourist travel;

RECOMMENDS that

(1) (a) National tourist organizations should

(i) give priority to organized and co-ordinated publicity;

(ii) stimulate the preservation and development of scenic areas and cultural characteristics and accessibility thereto;

(iii) encourage and promote enterprises and activities conducive to the promotion of tourist travel, with particular reference to hotel accommodation, guide services and other amenities;

(iv) endeavour to obtain modification of regulations tending to impede free movement of students, traders and tourists;

(b) ECAFE member and associate member countries not having tourist organizations be urged to undertake their early formation with budgetary appropriations adequate for their development;

/(c) with a view
(c) with a view to establishing their tourist bureaux on a sound basis these countries could with advantage seek as advisers qualified travel experts from other countries, and possibly through the proposed Technical Assistance Programme of the United Nations:

and that

(2) The Secretariat be requested to

(a) invite tourist agencies in member and associate member countries to stimulate tourist travel generally throughout the region as a whole, as well as in their own territories;

(b) explore the possibility of securing the issue by recognized publishers or by interested governments of handbooks on travel in Asia and the Far East;

(c) encourage publishers in ECAFE countries of books and brochures on travel, including governmental and tourist agencies, to disseminate these by sale or otherwise as widely as possible through agents abroad;

(d) invite the publishers to resume the issue of their pre-war Far Eastern Travellers' Gazette;

(e) encourage the publication of good regional maps showing travel and transportation facilities;

(f) complete and bring up to date material contained in Appendix II to document TRA/WG/1, re-issue it as soon as possible, and supplement or modify it from time to time;

(g) bring to the notice of any ad hoc ECAFE Committee of experts dealing with inland transport (i) the results of the surveys referred to in Recommendation (15) (a) in view of the close relationship between hotel accommodation and transport (ii) the suggestion regarding the restoration of the international services referred to in paragraph 22 of the report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Travel and (iii) the possibility of further regional action covering international conventions referred to in Recommendation 19;

II. DECLARING that the primary objective should be to encourage relaxation of controls;

RECOGNIZES nevertheless that in particular cases exigencies of the situation may have to be the determining factor, and that all recommendations in Section II are to be regarded as subject to this limitation, and

RECOMMENDS that ECAFE member and associate member governments

(3) (a) review their control regulations at intervals with a view to eliminating or simplifying them as soon as circumstances permit;
(b) maintain high standards of integrity in the administration of customs, immigration and other services affecting the travelling public;

(c) effect clearance of entries and departures as quickly as possible;

(d) endeavour in the interest of travellers and carriers alike to give adequate advance notice of changes in travel regulations;

(e) reduce to a minimum photograph requirements for all purposes;

NOTING that existing conditions do not make it possible to waive the requirement that a passport be carried;

RECOMMENDS that

(4) (a) bilateral and multilateral agreements to waive passport requirements be encouraged and be more widely applied by ECAFE member and associate member governments, and wherever considered suitable, the practice of issuing tourist cards be instituted to facilitate travel within the ECAFE region and to adjacent areas;

(b) governments facilitate travel by issuing passports as promptly as possible;

(c) except where special circumstances apply, passports be valid for world-wide travel;

(d) as a general rule passports be valid for five years, and facilities be given for easy renewals, if possible for the same period as at initial issue, so long as the total validity of the passport does not exceed ten years;

(e) passport fees should be as low as possible and should not be regarded as a source of revenue; fees charged should be per passport and not per person;

NOTING further that procedures for securing a visa should be simplified, and

CONSIDERING that concessions on a reciprocal basis appear to offer the most promising approach to the general relaxation of visa requirements;

RECOMMENDS that

(b) wherever possible, governments delegate to their consular or other representatives in foreign countries authority to issue transit and temporary visitors' visas without reference to the home government;

(b) when visas are issued in languages other than generally recognized commercial languages, a translation in English or French be provided;

/(c) the procedure
(c) the procedure of applying for a visa be simplified; in particular the number of documents and photographs required in support of an application be kept to a minimum, and personal attendance by an applicant be waived wherever possible;

EXPRESSING ITS VIEW that, though receipt of a visa should carry the right of entry to a country, special considerations including health and financial status at the time of entry may reasonably affect such a right;

RECOMMENDS that

(6) (a) a visa should in normal circumstances carry the right of entry into a country;

(b) (i) visas be valid for at least six, and where possible twelve, months from date of issue;

(ii) in appropriate cases visas be made available for an unlimited number of entries within the period of their validity;

(iii) visas be valid at any port of entry by any regular route authorized for foreign passenger travel;

(iv) where a traveller has entered a country, an inland travel permit should not be required;

(v) temporary visitors' visas for students, tourists and traders be valid for a minimum of 90 days with the possibility of an extension for 90 days;

(vi) except in respect of transit travellers and where shortage of accommodation necessitates, applicants for visas be not required to furnish proof of travel or hotel reservations;

RECOMMENDS that

(7) (a) transit visas for direct transit passengers entering a country as an incident in the course of an unbroken and continuous journey (i.e. on same plane or ship) be not required;

(b) where found necessary, landing cards or permits for a short stay stamped in passports be accepted in lieu of transit visa;

(c) in case of an emergency, normal transit visa requirements be waived as far as practicable;

(d) visa fees be as low as possible and, pending their complete abolition, reciprocity agreements providing for their abolition or reduction should be encouraged;

(e) where the use of collective passports has been approved, individual visas be not required thereon;

(f) head tax and other imposts additional to the cost of entrance visa be not charged;

/(8) except in
(q) except in the interests of justice and public order, passports of travellers visiting or passing through a country be not taken from them;

TAKING NOTE of the importance of expediting procedures in the clearance of passengers;

RECOMMENDS that

(27) (a) ECAFE member and associate member countries keep under constant review their immigration controls in respect of non-immigrant travel so as to relax them whenever circumstances permit;
(b) passport inspection be carried out expeditiously and that, where possible, inspectors speaking a recognised commercial language be employed;
(c) passengers be cleared individually by immigration inspectors and be not required to await the clearance of all before any are free to leave;
(d) governments and carriers arrange that all clearance forms be distributed by carriers to passengers en route and collected before landing, and presented en bloc to immigration and customs authorities;

(10) wherever a deposit may be demanded to avoid financial burden to a country resulting from the presence of foreign visitors without funds, there be no discrimination in its imposition and it be not in effect a denial of facilities to persons of moderate means:

RECOGNIZING that in some countries requirements in excess of the standards of the International Sanitary Conventions are demanded in respect of vaccination and inoculation certificates, and

EXPRESSING ITS APPRECIATION of the progress being made by the World Health Organization toward revision of the International Sanitary Conventions and in persuading ECAFE member and associate member countries to come into line with international requirements under existing conventions in respect of vaccination and inoculation requirements;

NOTES that the ratification of the International Sanitary Convention by India and Pakistan was subject to certain reservations particularly in regard to yellow fever;

RECOMMENDS that

(11) (a) ECAFE member and associate member governments recognize and honour the international certificates of inoculation and vaccination of the International Sanitary Conventions for Aerial Navigation of 1933 as amended in 1944, and the
International Sanitary Convention for Maritime Navigation of 1936 as amended in 1944, with such changes from time to time as are effected by the World Health Organization in accordance with its constitution;

RECOGNIZING that spending by tourists within the countries which they visit is a primary aim in encouraging tourism and that, though certain major policy questions of finance are involved, some immediate measures could be taken by governments;

RECOMMENDS that member and associate member governments

(12) (a) make foreign exchange available as liberally as possible to students, traders and tourists;

(b) take appropriate steps to enable tourists to make the best use of their exchange resources in the purchase of goods in countries they visit;

(c) provide or encourage the provision of adequate authorized exchange facilities at airports and steamer terminals and at hotels normally patronised by travellers, and give full publicity at these places to the current rates of exchange and any regulations covering reconversion into foreign exchange of local currencies acquired by travellers;

(d) subject to such bilateral arrangements as may be in effect between particular states, permit travellers entering countries restricting the import or export of foreign exchange - that is, foreign bank notes and financial instruments denominated in foreign currencies, such as travellers' cheques and travellers' letters of credit - to obtain a certificate or inscription on their passports showing the amount of such bank notes and such financial instruments in their possession and, upon leaving the country and surrendering the certificates, to take the unused portion of such bank notes and financial instruments with them; similarly a certificate or inscription in the passport should be furnished whenever additional funds are received by the traveller from abroad while he is in the country, and the unused portion of such funds should likewise be made available to the traveller in the original currency, if desired, when he leaves the country;

RECOGNIZING that it is desirable to relax customs formalities for travellers as far as possible;

RECOMMENDS that ECAFE member and associate member governments

(13) (a) liberalize import and export regulations to the fullest extent administratively and legislatively practicable with regard to control of, and duty imposed on, personal effects and samples carried in baggage;
(b) publicize through appropriate channels their customs procedure, including lists of typical articles which may not be imported, which may be imported duty free, and which may not be exported, together, if necessary, with information on the maximum value of such articles which may be imported or exported;

(c) provide adequate inspection and bonding facilities at all customs stations to meet changing demands of travel, including suitable bonded storage space for passengers' luggage at international airports to reduce the necessity of examining transit passengers' baggage;

(d) provide customs staff adequate in numbers, and including, where possible, inspectors speaking a recognized commercial language, to attend expeditiously to the baggage of arriving and departing passengers at airports and steamship terminals, and invite responsible representatives of travel agencies to assist passengers where luggage difficulties arise;

(e) provide in customs sheds adequate passenger comfort facilities such as spacious waiting rooms with chairs, benches, fans and clean lavatory facilities;

EXPRESSING ITS VIEW that exit requirements should be simplified;

RECOMMENDS that

(14) (a) exit visas, wherever required in ECAFE countries, be abolished;

(b) other exit formalities be simplified and reduced to a minimum, including exit permits, clearance certificates, income tax certificates, immigration certificates and ration deletion certificates; and facilities for complying with such of these as must remain be centralised for the convenience of travellers;

(c) governments consider means by which re-entry of aliens normally resident in a country or of temporary visitors therein, who may leave it temporarily, may be facilitated without the necessity of individual visas being secured on each occasion of re-entry;

III. TAKING NOTE that hotel, hostel and rest house accommodation in the region is inadequate in quantity and quality, and in particular that suitable but inexpensive accommodation for tourists is needed;

RECOMMENDS that

(15) (a) the ECAFE Secretariat consult with governments with a view to arranging for surveys of hotel accommodation in the region to be made by tourist agencies and other organizations with the object of improving existing facilities and creating additional ones, the work to be undertaken without charge to the Secretariat or governments;

/(b) ECAFE member
(b) ECAFE member and associate member governments stimulate the development by commercial and other interests of hotel accommodation at international airports for the convenience of travellers;

NOTING the need for improvement of airline terminals for passengers;

RECOMMENDS that

(16) authorities responsible for airline terminals ensure that facilities at these terminals including rest rooms, showers, toilets, barber shops, restaurants, emergency medical care, radio, telephone and postal services, are maintained at a high standard;

AFFIRMING the need for more passages at moderate rates;

RECOMMENDS that

(17) carriers be urged to conclude agreements enabling composite through tickets at reduced fares to be issued with provisions for optional aircraft, steamship or other forms of travel;

NOTING that failure to adhere to steamship and airline schedules tends to discourage touristic and commercial travel;

RECOMMENDS that

(18) airline and steamship companies be urged to publish regularly schedules of flights and sailings, and to do their utmost to hold to these schedules;

IV. NOTING that other international organizations may be able to support the efforts of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East in respect of tourist travel within the region;

RECOMMENDS that

(19) (a) the Transport and Communications Commission of the Economic and Social Council be urged to continue its programme for the reduction, simplification and unification of passports and frontier formalities;

(b) all ECAFE member and associate member governments take prompt steps to adopt the ICAO Standard Forms and Recommended Practices in the Facilitation of International Air Transport;

(c) the attention of member and associate member governments be drawn to the Convention on Road Transport (1949) which they be urged to sign and ratify at an early date;

(d) the official travel agencies or the offices representing the travel interests of all governments in the ECAFE region should be requested to join the International Union of Official Travel Organizations; the IUOTO should be urged to establish a regional office
a regional office in the ECAFE region to foster and coordinate the development of tourist travel, and to include in its international travel statistics information concerning ECAFE member and associate member countries, and Japan;

RECOGNIZING that joint action by some governments in efforts to induce tourist travel might in many cases prove more effective than individual action;

RECOMMENDS that

(20) the Secretariat explore with governments in the region the possibility of establishing joint publicity and tourist agencies in those countries from which it is desired to attract travellers; and

RECOGNIZING that implementation by governments of the recommendations in this report at an early date is desirable,

RECOMMENDS that

(21) qualified members of the ECAFE Secretariat should visit member and associate member governments after consultation with them, to assist in securing early adoption of the measures recommended.

/WORKING GROUP