

Education Ministers for their first two meetings—in Bangkok and Manila. They met again last month in Singapore and signed a charter for their organization, selected a permanent Director, and agreed on a headquarters site. They heard detailed reports of progress on the first six regional projects and endorsed their implementation.

This program is most encouraging evidence that the countries of Southeast Asia do wish to cooperate on development programs, and can reconcile differences and submerge their strong nationalistic feelings in a common undertaking. We plan to support this effort from AID funds.

And as I mentioned earlier, Malaysia hosted a conference of representatives of eight Southeast Asian countries in September to examine regional communications and transportation needs of the area and consider coordinated development plans.

The region's central bankers and planners are now meeting regularly to consider common economic, financial, and development policies.

Third, there is the continuing role, and growing involvement, of other international agencies. The World Bank and its affiliates have stepped up their capital assistance to the area. The World Bank is administering the funds for the construction of the Nam Ngum Dam in Laos. It chairs consultative groups of donor nations for Thailand, Malaysia, and Korea. And the World Bank, in close cooperation with the IMF, is helping Indonesia determine its priority needs. In that connection may I add that the Asian Development Bank made its own contribution with a technical mission, already completed, to advise the Government of Indonesia on production and marketing of foodstuffs. The Mekong Committee is pursuing work, on comprehensive development plans for the Mekong Basin.

Fourth, there is a slowly increasing involvement of Western European donor countries in Southeast Asia, both bilateral and through the IBRD's consultative groups, and more recently through the Asian Development Bank. Some 27 countries are contributing to the work of the Mekong development program. Nine countries have contributed to the Nam Ngum Dam in Laos. The Dutch Government is the chairman of a group of donors in support of Indonesia's stabilization program. Thirty-six countries, including Western European, have contributed economic assistance and war relief to South Vietnam.

Lastly, there is reason to feel encouraged about the long-range development prospects in most of East Asia. Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, the Republic of China, and Korea are examples of what can be accomplished under sound economic policies in East Asia. There is a new sense of confidence in the area to which our stand in Vietnam has contributed significantly. And while per capita income in most countries is still low, East Asia, overall, enjoys a favorable balance of resources to population offering great promise under sound management.

U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS

Let me now outline briefly the major terms and conditions on which we would expect to make our funds available to the Asian Bank. The favorable report on this legislation by the National Advisory Council also deals with these points in detail.

As to our share of the total funds to be provided, we envisage that other developed countries would contribute a majority of the total.