

FOREWORD

1. This Report was prepared at a meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Committee on South and South-East Asia, which took place in London in September 1950. The Governments represented at the meeting were Australia, Canada, Ceylon, India, New Zealand, Pakistan and the United Kingdom.

2. At the first meeting of the Consultative Committee at Sydney in May 1950 the decision was taken to draw up a six-year programme of economic development for countries in South and South-East Asia, and it was also decided to invite other countries in the area to join in this co-operative enterprise to make a comprehensive attack upon the problem of poverty and under-development in the area as a whole. The Governments of Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam, and the Government of Thailand, accordingly sent delegations to a joint meeting with the members of the Consultative Committee early in October 1950; the Ambassadors in London of Burma and Indonesia attended this meeting as observers on behalf of their Governments.

3. These Governments have all been invited to participate in the further work necessary for the success of the plan, and to prepare development programmes on the same lines as those which have been prepared by the Commonwealth Governments in the area. They have also been invited to join the Council for Technical Co-operation which the London meeting agreed to set up. These Governments are now considering their attitude to the plan in the light of the reports received from their delegates (Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Viet-Nam) or observers (Burma, Indonesia) who attended the joint meeting.

4. Thus, whilst this Report has been prepared by Governments represented on the Commonwealth Consultative Committee, and consequently deals in detail primarily with the problems and programmes of the Commonwealth Governments in the area, the needs of the other countries in the area are very similar to those of the Commonwealth countries, and it is hoped that at a later stage they will prepare similar programmes which will enable a complete conspectus to be made of the problem of development of the whole area.