

INTRODUCTION

At its first meeting, in February, 1946, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations decided to call an International Conference to consider the scope of and the appropriate machinery for international action in the field of public health. It appointed a Technical Preparatory Committee, comprising sixteen experts and representatives of four interested organizations, to make the necessary preparations for the Conference.

The World Health Conference met in New York from 19 June to 22 July, 1946, attended by representatives or observers from nearly all States and by representatives from ten interested organizations. The New Zealand representatives were Dr T. R. Ritchie and Dr H. B. Turbott, who signed the following documents adopted by the Conference :—

- (1) Final Act of the International Health Conference, recording the convening and decisions of the Conference.
- (2) Constitution of the World Health Organization.
- (3) Arrangement concluded by the Governments represented at the International Health Conference.
- (4) Protocol concerning the *Office International d'Hygiène Publique*.

The Instruments of Ratification by New Zealand of the Constitution of the World Health Organization and of the Protocol concerning the *Office International d'Hygiène Publique* were deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 10 December, 1946.

The objective of the World Health Organization is "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health." The functions, scope, and procedures of the Organization for the attainment of its objective, including the establishment of regional organizations, are indicated in the Constitution. The Organization will be brought into relationship with the United Nations as one of the specialized agencies referred to in Article 57 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Organization will also establish effective relations and co-operate closely with other inter-governmental and international organizations.

It will be noted that the Interim Commission of the World Health Organization, established pursuant to the Arrangement concluded by the Governments represented at the International Health Conference, and now functioning, is directed to assume the functions of the League of Nations Health Organization, of the *Office International d'Hygiène Publique*, and of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation