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07898



Distr.  
Limited  
ID/WG.249/10  
24 June 1977  
English

**United Nations Industrial Development Organization**

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Meeting with Non-Governmental Organizations  
having Consultative Status with UNIDO on  
Co-operation between these Organizations  
and UNIDO  
Vienna, Austria, 24-25 May 1977

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE FERTILIZER  
INDUSTRY IN THE ARAB STATES**

by

**the Arab Federation of Chemical  
Fertilizer Producers**

id. 77-6000

The formation of the Arab Federation of Chemical Fertilizer Producers was announced on the first of March 1975, and the Federation began its work on the first of April 1976. Most of the time since then has been devoted to structural arrangements, but it has also been possible to establish relations with international organizations and to enlarge the Federation's membership.

At present the active members of the Federation are 22 companies from 12 Arab countries that deal in nitrogenous, phosphate and potash fertilizers and their raw materials. In addition, a number of international companies and consultancy organizations have observer status with the Federation.

To strengthen its ties with international organizations working in the same field, the Federation acquired consultative status with UNIDO in May 1976 and liaison status with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in April 1977. At the recent world-wide consultation on fertilizers organized by UNIDO, the Federation gave general comments on the situation in the Arab countries.

Some of the Federation's activities and proposed contributions towards achieving the objectives of the Lima Declaration within the Arab world are summarized below.

#### Studies

The Federation helped to complete the study on the development of the fertilizer industry in the Arab States which was prepared by the Industrial Development Centre for Arab States (IDCAS) in collaboration with the British Sulphur Corporation. A conference will be held to evaluate the study and to propose ways of carrying out the recommendations expected to arise from the discussions.

A working team composed of officials from UNIDO, IDCAS and the Federation began a two-month tour through eight Arab countries on 10 April with the objective of preparing a study covering all aspects of fertilizer-industry development. At the end of the mission a report will be written, the findings and recommendations of which will be a guide in using the funds allocated by the United Nations Development Programme for the development of the fertilizer industry in the Arab world.

### Events

Experts from all over the world are expected to participate in a seminar being planned by the Federation on raising the productivity of the existing fertilizer plants in the Arab world. The event is scheduled to be held in December 1977 in one of the Arab countries. It will be complemented by the construction of new fertilizer plants. UNIDO assistance will be sought for financing the seminar, especially as regards the printing of reports and translations.

The main subjects of the seminar will be:

- (a) The lack of skilled manpower and how it affects productivity;
- (b) The lack of technical data and production information;
- (c) Maintenance problems and organization;
- (d) Safety problems and occupational hazards and their effects on productivity;
- (e) The factors affecting the removal of bottle-necks in production units;
- (f) Difficulties in securing the spare parts, catalysts and auxiliary chemicals needed for production;
- (g) Technical problems in plants and their effects on productivity;
- (h) The external causes of shutdown, such as difficulties in procuring raw materials and spare parts, shipping and unloading problems, marketing problems and electric current failures;
- (i) Management-staff relations and incentives at fertilizer plants;
- (j) The effects of automatic quality control on productivity.

At the invitation of the Government of Iraq, the Federation will organize an international fair at Baghdad in March 1978. Many international companies will be invited to participate.

### Training

One of the Federation's chief concerns is training. In discussions with UNIDO particular attention has been given to the possibility of arranging specialized training in maintenance programming and scheduling for the staff of existing fertilizer plants.

Publications

The Federation will issue a statistical yearbook covering commercial agriculture and the fertilizer industry in the Arab world. The yearbook should help UNIDO intensify its understanding of the situation of the fertilizer industry in the Arab world as part of its world-wide study of the industry.

To help farmers use fertilizers efficiently, a handbook is being prepared on the application of fertilizers to different soils and crops. The Federation is also planning to issue a directory giving technological processes applicable in Arab plants. It will include a description and assessment of the processes currently being used in Arab countries.

Prospects for developing the fertilizer industry in the Arab world

The recent world-wide study by UNIDO of the fertilizer industry 1975-2000 indicated that the developing countries would have to more than double their production of chemical fertilizers by 1980 in order to reach the target set down in the Lima Declaration.

The Arab world's potential contribution to this effort is shown below. The table gives the amount of chemical fertilizers produced in Arab countries in 1975 and a projection for 1980, when production is expected to more than double because many new plants will begin operating. (The figures do not take into account potash, which will be produced from the Dead Sea starting in 1980-1982, or the potential of existing plants to expand operations if needed.)

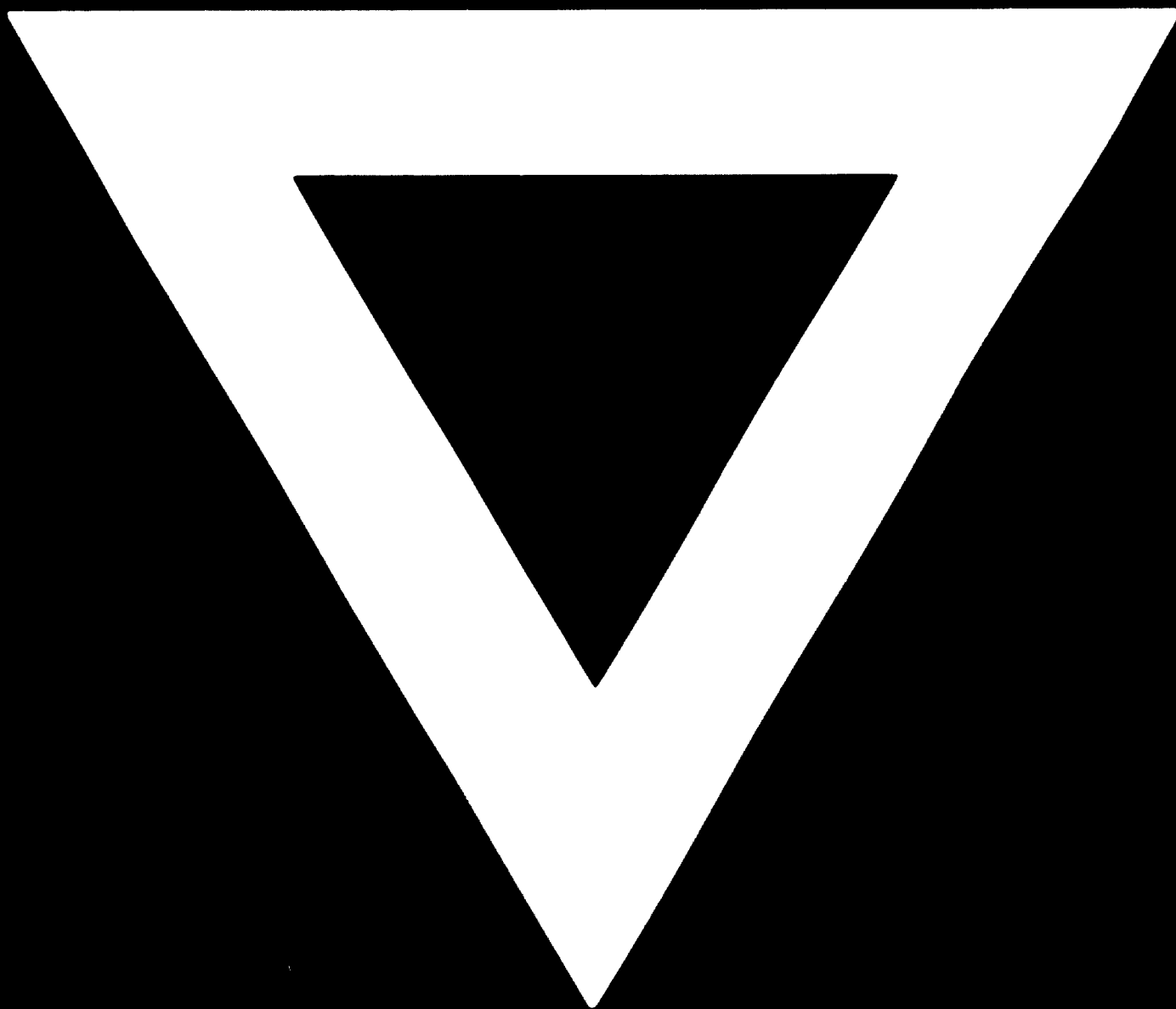
	<u>Production of fertilizer</u> (in thousands of tons)	
	<u>1975</u> (Actual)	<u>1980</u> (Projected)
Nitrogenous fertilizer	1,053.1	2,484.9
Phosphatic fertilizer	911.7	2,014.3

The following factors should help the Arab fertilizer industry compete in the world market:

- (a) Raw materials are abundant in the Arab States;
- (b) The required capital investment is available;
- (c) The market for fertilizers is growing, both locally and internationally.



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