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REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE UNACAST
REGIONAL GROUP FOR AFRICA
Addis Ababa, 10-12 July 1972

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INTRODUCTION

Opening and duration of the meeting

1. The Regional Group for Africa of the UN Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development held its Seventh Consultative Meeting at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa, in Addis Ababa from 10 to 12 July 1972.

Attendance

2. All the four members of the Regional Group attended the meeting. Other bodies and agencies represented were: the Office of Science and Technology, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (ESA), UN Headquarters, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

3. The meeting was attended by 21 participants: a complete list of participants is given in Annex II.

Organization of the meeting

4. The meeting was opened by Mr. P. Rajaobelina, the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, who read an address on behalf of the Executive Secretary. After welcoming the members of the Regional Group he called the attention of the meeting to the important business before it, namely that of putting the document on the African Regional Plan for the World Plan of Action in its final form, prior to its submission to the full meeting of UNACAST at the 17th session. In this respect he recalled the important contributions that had been made by the Economic Commission for Africa, and other UN organizations and agencies during the preparation of the African Regional Plan. An important stage had now been reached, and the further elaboration of the plan at the country level would now largely depend on the initiative of individual countries. The Regional Plan provides a good framework for action, but individual African countries should now select and prepare those projects which they consider essential for implementation to suit their own development needs. Individual countries would be expected to make a substantial financial contribution towards the cost of the projects under the WPA. The United Nations, its agencies and other international organizations would be expected to lend their assistance in the preparation and implementation of projects.

5. The Hon. Dr. W.K. Chagula presided over the meeting. The meeting proceeded to adopt the agenda which appears in Annex I.

Documentation

6. The main documents considered by the Regional Group for Africa at this meeting are listed in Annex III.

Press Conference

7. The members of the Regional Group for Africa attended a luncheon given by the Foreign Press Association of Ethiopia on 11 July 1972 at which the Hon. Dr. W.K. Chagula, Chairman of the Group, addressed the press on the Regional Plan for Africa in the World Plan of Action. After his address he answered a few questions put by the audience.

Closure of the meeting

8. The meeting closed at 1:00 p. m. on 12 July 1972.

I. Confirmation of the Report of the Sixth Meeting

9. The meeting approved the Report of its Sixth Consultative Meeting held in Addis Ababa from 18 October to 21 October 1971.

II. African Regional Plan for the World Plan of Action

10. The meeting had before it document S&T/WPA/42 for consideration under this item.

11. In opening the discussion, the Chairman informed the meeting that the first six chapters in the document had already been considered during the Sixth Consultative Meeting of the Regional Group and that any suggestions made at that meeting together with the comments received from the relevant UN agencies had already been taken into account by the secretariat. Additional comments were, however, welcome but these were not expected to be of a substantial nature.

12. The various written comments on the African Regional Plan received from UN organizations and specialized agencies were carefully examined by the members of the Regional Group for Africa. The Group accepted a number of suggestions for inclusion in the final draft of the Regional Plan.

13. The following amendments of the Plan were accepted by the meeting:

Introduction

14. Reference should be made about the African Strategy for Science and Technology Development at an appropriate place in the "Introduction". On the question of the National Committees for the World Plan of Action, it was considered that it would be appropriate for each committee to work under and be part of the National Planning Commission or Ministry. The question concerning the setting up of a Regional Committee for the WPA was considered, but the meeting decided that this was not necessary. Members thought that the Regional Economic Commission should undertake the responsibility of regional co-ordination of the activities to be undertaken under the Plan.

Chapter I

15. It was agreed that the title of the Chapter "General Development of Scientific and Technological Capacity" would be retained.

Chapter III

16. Under Project (b) in Programme X it was agreed to expand the examples to include the development of new mixes for bread based on local materials such as cassava.

Chapter VII

17. The WHO representative called the attention of the meeting to a document he had submitted on the 7th July 1972, which contained relevant material for this Chapter. He suggested that the existing Chapter VII in the African Regional Plan be replaced by his document. The Group rejected this request. However, the document was examined in detail and members indicated which suggestions contained in the WHO document should be incorporated in the existing chapter. The Secretariat was requested to make the necessary amendments.

Chapter VIII

18. The representative of UNESCO informed the meeting that his organization would like to have more time to prepare comments on this Chapter. It was agreed that these be communicated to ECA before the end of July 1972 to enable the secretariat to meet the deadline already set for the preparation of the final draft of the Regional Plan.

19. It was agreed to include a project on continuing technological education under Programme VII and to reflect this in the introduction to the Chapter and in the "Objectives".

20. Dr. Sai submitted a modified draft for two paragraphs dealing with medical education on pages 168-169 and these were accepted.

Chapter IX

21. It was agreed to add one project under Programme II to read:

"Project (d) : Studies to determine the effects of rural development on population distribution".

Chapter X

22. The meeting agreed after considerable discussion, that the Chapter title be renamed "Transfer of Technology" to correspond to the nomenclature already adopted by UNACAST. The introduction to the chapter should, however, contain explanation to indicate that Chapter X would deal only with the transfer of technology as an article of commerce, since other aspects of the transfer of technology are dealt with in the preceding chapters.

III. African Strategy for Science and Technology Development

23. The meeting received and took note of document E/CN.14/ECO/42 on the African Strategy for Science and Technology Development.

IV. Preparation of Country Plans

24. Under Agenda item 5, the document "Preparation of Country Plans for the WPA in the African Region" (Doc. UNACAST/AF.REG/VII.2) was presented by the Chairman, Dr. Chagula. The Group agreed upon the proposals contained in the document on the "preparation of country plans for the World Plan of Action in the African region" (UNACAST/AF.REG/VII.2).

25. The Group felt that the countries which could not contribute 50 per cent of the budget cost of the projects selected for their country plans should nevertheless submit their projects and seek better arrangements.

26. Mr. B. Châtel informed the meeting about the promotional activities which were being undertaken by the Office of Science and Technology, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

V. Research for Developing Countries

27. Under Agenda item 6, the document "Research for Developing Countries: Global projects and case studies for the African region" (Doc. UNACAST/AF.REG/VII.3) was presented by Dr. Banjo.

28. Presenting this document, the ECA representative explained that UNDP had earmarked one per cent of its financial resources for the support of global projects in science and technology. The paper presented Five global projects. After the careful consideration of each project, the following projects were chosen for elaboration and presentation to UNDP on behalf of the African region.

Project 1: Creation of regional institutions for marine science and technology;

Project 4: Creation of a regional centre for rural settlement studies and design; and

Project 5: Creation of a regional centre for research and development into new methods of disease and vector control.

VI. Review of the Programmes and Activities of UN Organizations Concerned with the Application of Science and Technology in Africa

29. Under Agenda item 7, the ECA representative presented the following documents to the meeting:

"Development of scientific and technological capacity"
(Doc. UNACAST/AF.REG.VII.4(c)).

"Development of transportation technological progress in shipping"
(Doc. UNACAST/AF.REG/VII.4(c)).

30. The representatives of WMO, WHO and UNESCO made short statements about the development in the activity of their organizations in the application of science and technology in Africa. They later submitted written versions which are summarized below:

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

31. In presenting the programmes and activities of his organization, the representative of WMO pointed out that the overall activities in the application of science and technology were being conceived within the atmospheric resources programme of the natural resources sector of the WPA. The WMO's contribution to Africa would concentrate on assisting the various countries to improve their national meteorological and hydrological services so as to increase their contribution to economic development. He cited examples of professional manpower training programmes which WMO was undertaking in various countries and sub-regions of Africa. In meteorological research, some African countries were already showing interest in the World Weather Watch Programme whose essential feature was to ensure that the new scientific and technological advances are made available to the developing countries.

World Health Organization (WHO)

32. The WHO representative, in reviewing the programmes and activities of his organization, informed the Group that research continued to be an intrinsic part of all operational programmes of his organization, and that during 1971 five regional reference centres, and research and training centres were designated, bringing their total to 206 at the end of that year. Research on specific diseases and on vector control continued within national, inter-country and inter-regional projects, and various grants had been given in support of research in a large number of health and medical fields. He finally pointed out that the activities of his organization were guided by the priorities set out by the African member States in the following areas: support for medical research, provision of services for investigators, training for investigators, and better exchange of views among scientists.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

33. The representative of UNESCO drew the attention of the meeting to the fact that the current programmes of his organization were very similar to those on which he had provided reports at the Sixth Consultative Meeting of the UNACAST Regional Group for Africa, and said that he would merely make additional comments. In the areas of science policy and the organization of research, preparations were in hand for the Conference of African Ministers of Science (CAST-AFRICA) which is scheduled to be held in Dakar, Senegal, from 3 to 12 December 1973. Close co-operation was being maintained with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity in the preparation for this important Conference. His organization was also planning to launch a new programme, "Science in the 1970's", which would deal with the implications of scientific advances for mankind and also continue with the promotion of public understanding of science and its relation to society.

34. In the field of scientific and technological information, UNESCO was pursuing both the regional and international programmes of the World Scientific and Technical Information System (UNISIST) and in this connexion African member States would be encouraged to participate in this programme, and to elaborate their individual national programmes for possible assistance by UNESCO and other international organizations. The UNESCO Field Science Office for Africa had completed a survey of scientific and technical journals in Africa and was embarking on the publication of a Science Education Newsletter and an Engineering Newsletter.

35. Engineering education and engineering sciences and research were important areas of UNESCO's activity. The organization was planning to organize, during December 1972, a Regional Expert Meeting on Co-operation between Educational Institutions and Industry in the Education and Training of Engineers, and had continued to assist the newly formed Federation of African Organizations of Engineers. It was also planned to hold a Regional Seminar on Solar Energy and its Applications in Africa in Niamey, Niger, during October 1972.

36. Under its programmes for Environmental Sciences, UNESCO was continuing with the execution of the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB), and it was also planned to launch the international geological correlation programme in which African member States were being invited to participate.

VII. Any other Business

37. Mr. Châtel informed the meeting about the importance of exploration and research into the possibilities of the utilization of geothermal sources of energy.

38. It was decided to include the subject of geothermal energy surveys in Project (d), Programme I of Chapter 2.

39. He also informed the meeting about UNESCO/ITU feasibility study on the utilization of telecommunication satellites for education in Africa. The Group took note of this information.

40. Finally, the Chairman thanked all the participants for their contribution and declared the meeting closed.

Annex I : AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Confirmation of the Report of the Sixth Meeting
3. African Regional Plan for the World Plan of Action
4. African Strategy for Science and Technology Development
5. Preparation of Country Plans for the WPA in the African Region
6. Research for developing countries: Global projects and case studies for the African region
7. Review of the programmes and activities of UN organizations concerned with the application of science and technology in Africa
8. Any other business

Annex II : LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Members of the African Regional Group

H.E. Dr. W.K. Chagula
Mr. Mourad Castel
Mr. Léonard Mukendi
Dr. F.T. Sai

United Nations Secretariat

Office of Science and Technology, ESA

Mr. B. Châtel

Economic Commission for Africa

Science and Technology Section

Dr. A. Banjo
Mr. T.S. Karumuna
Mr. A. Mensah
Mr. I. Semyenov

Natural Resources Section

Dr. N.C. Otieno

Manpower and Training Section

Mr. S.I. Edokpayi

Industry and Housing Division

Mr. A.B. Puplampu

Population Programme Centre

Mr. I. Ba

United Nations Children's Fund

Mr. A. Demere

United Nations Development Programme

Mr. Michael Sternberg for Mr. Seib

Specialized Agencies

International Labour Organisation

Mr. M. Hamdi

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Mr. Ali El Tom
Mr. E. Okwuosa (Alternate)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chief Olu Ibukun

World Health Organization

Dr. A.H. Thomas

World Meteorological Organization

Mr. A.M. Alamly

Annex III : LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<u>Document No.</u>	<u>Title</u>
UNACAST/AF.REG/VII.1	Provisional Agenda
E/CN.14/546	Report of the Sixth Meeting of the UNACAST Regional Group for Africa
S&T/WPA/42	African Regional Plan for the World Plan of Action
E/CN.14/ECO/42	African Strategy for Science and Technology Development
UNACAST/AF.REG/VII.2	Preparation of Country Plans for the WPA in the African Region
UNACAST/AF.REG/VII.3	Research for developing countries: Global projects and case studies for the African region
UNACAST/AF/REG/VII.4	Review of the programmes and activities of UN organizations concerned with the application of science and technology in Africa

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