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REPORT OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL, REGIONAL  
AND WORLD PLANS OF ACTION FOR THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN  
IN DEVELOPMENT

(Nouakchott, Mauritania, 27 September - 2 October 1977)

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## PART ONE

### ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

#### Organization of the Conference

1. The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development was held from 27 September to 2 October 1977, at the Hotel El Ahmedi in Nouakchott, Mauritania. It was organized under the joint sponsorship of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Office of Technical Co-operation, in co-operation with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.
2. The main purpose of the Conference was to review the progress made by member States and by inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations operating in Africa in the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action which was officially adopted as part of the World Plan of Action at the World Conference of the International Women's Year held in Mexico City in 1975.
3. The Conference was also in line with General Assembly Resolution 3520 (XXX), which stressed the importance of regular reviews and appraisals of progress made in achieving the goals of the World Plan of Action and with the proclamation by the General Assembly of the period 1976-1985 as the "United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, to be devoted to effective and sustained national, regional and international action to implement the World Plan of Action and related resolutions".
4. The Conference was attended by 71 official participants representing 35 government delegations as follows: Angola, Botswana, Cape Verde, the Central African Empire, the Congo, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, the Sudan, Swaziland, the United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the Upper Volta, Zaire and Zambia.
5. Forty-one observers were present representing Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States of America and the following international and non-governmental organizations: the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Office of Technical Co-operation, the Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Organization for the Development of the Senegal River (OMVS), the Pan-African Development Institute (PAID), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), The Bahai International

Community, the Pan-African Women's Organization, the World Young Women's Christian Association, the Association of African Women for Research and Development, the American Friends Service Committee, the Ford Foundation, the International Centre for Research on Women, the International Co-operative Alliance, the International Federation of Family Economics, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. Observers were also present from the trade union congresses of Ghana, Kenya and Zambia.

### Opening of the Conference

6. The Conference was opened by Mr. Moktar Ould Daddah, President of Mauritania, who noted that the men and women of Africa faced identical problems related to the intensive economic, social and cultural change occurring in their societies. In that connexion the role of women was fundamental, and women provided the community with its most solid support. The Conference therefore had a very significant contribution to make to Africa's struggle for development.

7. Mr. Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, reviewed the objectives of the Conference and described the work being done by the Commission with a view to the integration of women in development activities. He commended all the African countries represented at the meeting on their efforts to establish national machinery to facilitate the integration of women in development in compliance with the recommendations contained in the World Plan of Action adopted in Mexico City in 1975 on the occasion of the World Conference of the International Women's Year. He thanked the many donor agencies which had given most generous support to the Women's Programme of the Commission.

8. The United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs sent a message designating Mrs. Lusibu N'Kanza, Director of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, as her representative to the Conference. The Assistant Secretary-General extended her thanks to the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and his staff for their co-operation in connexion with the preparation of the Regional and World Plans of Action. Their implementation of the Plans in the Africa Programme for the Advancement of Women has been a great encouragement to others at the United Nations. African Women had shown an active interest in managing their affairs, and that had acted as a stimulus to women in the rest of the world. After delivering the message from the Assistant Secretary-General Mrs. N'Kanza related the work of the Conference to that begun in Mexico City at the International Women's Year Conference, 1975, and confirmed through resolutions of the General Assembly in 1975 and 1976. She appealed for recognition of the human element of development, the absence of which had contributed to discrimination, war, imperialism, colonialism and the sufferings of women throughout history. She concluded by saying that women must be aware of their own problems and actively aided by Governments and the world community, so that men and women could together accelerate the process of development.

9. Mrs. Aissata Kane, President of the National Women's Commission of the Mauritania People's Party, said that the Conference was of fundamental importance

and that it gave reason for joy, for it proved that women were taking their places in the development process. She added that peace had been and should be a preoccupation of all women.

10. Mrs. Mariem Daddah, wife of the President of Mauritania, emphasized the necessity for African countries to promote global and integrated development rather than imitating industrialized countries; to make use of the true culture of their peoples as the basis for development; and to progressively eliminate the distinction between men and women.

### Election of officers

11. The Conference elected the following officers:

Chairman: Mrs. Aissata Kane, President, National Women's Commission of the Mauritania People's Party.

First Vice-Chairman: Mrs. Lily Monze, Minister of State for Economic and Technical Coöperation, Zambia.

Second Vice-Chairman: Mrs. Lunama-Lu-Nimy, Member, National Workers' Committee, Zaire.

Rapporteur: Mr. Khalil Belhaouane, Director, Administrator, Counsellor, Planner in Human Resources, Ministry of Planning, Tunisia.

### Adoption of the Agenda

12. The following agenda was unanimously adopted by the Conference:

- (1) Review of progress made in the implementation of Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development at the national and regional levels;
- (2) Future priorities and action for increasing women's participation in Africa's development and strategies to achieve the New International Economic Order and ECA's Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa, 1976 - 1981 - 1986;
- (3) Establishment of regional machinery to enhance the role of women in the economic and social development of Africa, and to promote and guide ECA's Training and Research Centre for Women;
- (4) National and Regional Action related to the International Year of the Child.

PART TWO  
GENERAL DEBATE

Review of progress made in the implementation of Plans of Action for the  
Integration of Women in Development at the national and regional levels  
Agenda Item 1

13. In the discussion on agenda item 1, representatives spoke of the progress made and action undertaken by their respective Governments for the advancement of women and their integration in development. Where organizational machinery was concerned, many Governments had established National Commissions on Women and Development and/or Women's Bureaux or Ministries of Women's Affairs. Some countries had strengthened the women's wings of national political parties in order to give them increased technical competence. Other countries had established systems and processes for enhancing the status of women by improving their legal, economic and social status, increasing school enrolments of girls and taking action leading to women's progressive participation in the decision-making process and facilitating their access to policy-making positions. Nevertheless, much remained to be done in that connexion.
14. Among the difficulties encountered by existing national machinery were the identification of problems in a systematic manner and the frequent overlapping of activities among several ministries engaged in women's work. Financial, social, political communication and transport problems slowed down the accomplishment of goals. Newly liberated countries faced special reconstruction difficulties in their struggle for economic independence.
15. Furthermore, it was commonly agreed that women's true advancement hinged on a national development effort. Some of the participants emphasized that the development effort was global and indivisible and that, consequently, women should not be relegated to a marginal position but should rather be integrated into development on an equal basis with men. In striving for that goal, literacy activities, training for women and services oriented to women's needs must of course be accorded utmost importance.
16. Particular attention must henceforth be devoted to women living in rural areas, all the more so as most African countries are primarily rural, and it is in the rural areas that Africa's problems are the most acute and relevant.
17. Stress was also laid on the need for planners to include in national development plans a human component involving the advancement of women and to promote their active participation in the economic and social development of their nation. In that development effort, responsibility for project initiative falls first of all on the countries themselves. Nevertheless, an effort to promote co-operation and assistance between African countries and agencies for assistance and research was found to be highly useful in helping countries to face up to the challenge of development. In that connexion, ECA had in 1975 created the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) within its Social Development Division, in response to the recommendations of Africa's Plan of Action and Resolution 269 (XII) of the ECA Conference of Ministers.

18. The Centre was intended to support government action and to provide a means of exchanging information and experience among the countries in the region. Some representatives felt that the Centre should be expanded to reach more of the continent, that it should disseminate information to familiarize people with its programme and above all that it should intensify its statistics-gathering and research activities. It should also increase its efforts to assist Governments in creating National Commissions, Women's Bureaux and similar machinery to promote studies and research, making it possible to identify the problems and constraints impeding the integration of women and to take the necessary action.

19. Representatives expressed their satisfaction with the activities realized thus far by the Centre in training, child care, the promotion of village technologies and the holding of local seminars on national machinery. It was suggested that the Centre's staff should be strengthened. The United Nations was strongly advised to make more regular posts available to ECA for ATRCW so that extra-budgetary funding might be reserved for operational activities.

20. Where education and training were concerned, African countries had made considerable progress, and universal free primary education had been achieved in some countries. The number of training programmes for women at the village level had increased but was still inadequate. Some national agencies had programmes aimed at installing technologies in villages; some were providing loans to women's groups and helping to set up co-operatives, and others had started vocational guidance services. One delegation reported the introduction of evening schools especially for married women. Several delegations expressed concern about the growing numbers of school-leavers, in rural areas, and proposed on-the-job training for work in rural areas. A few countries had launched mass literacy campaigns. Day-care demonstration centres were a major project in one country; training for employment in small-scale industries was effected through programmes of services to newly established entrepreneurs. The importance of teacher education was emphasized, and it was noted that such education must reflect African and rural situations. Training in agriculture, with emphasis on food production, was now a subject for women as well as men. It was observed that training institutes still produced persons who could not find employment.

21. The employment of women - particularly those who lived and worked in the rural areas and those who must find their livelihood in urban slums - was considered of special importance. Some countries had pilot projects in the countryside to augment agricultural production, processing and marketing in order that women might make more remunerative contributions to the needs of family and nation. The necessity of employing women in decision-making posts was stressed. Emphasis was also laid on the need to study employment patterns of rural women, in particular women heads of households, who were very numerous in several countries. Programmes to augment productivity included the dealing with cross-breeding, cattle fattening, fencing, poultry, vegetable growing, animal husbandry, hotel keeping and tailoring. In one country more than 50 per cent of the garment manufacturers were women, some of whom worked with sophisticated machines. Women members of police forces had fought side by side with men for national liberation.

22. Rural areas were often developed through self-help schemes which provided such facilities as improved water supplies, roads, day-care centres, oil presses and grinding mills. Co-operatives were being established in towns as well as rural areas; credit and saving associations helped women to engage in income-generating activities in many countries. Some representatives stressed the special employment needs of young women, in particular those living in slum areas. If they found employment, it was often oppressive. Countries in southern Africa suffered acutely from male migration and from domination by the South African economy.

23. Concerning mass communication, the need for communication within and between countries of the region was noted. The ECA Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) was asked to ensure that it possessed competency in the communication fields, in order that it be developed as a focal point for exchange of information among countries and on regional and sub-regional activities. There was a need to increase the number of African women writers, several of whom were already beginning to express themselves on the conditions and situations of women. One delegation reported the compilation of a directory of research studies, researchers, national programmes and activities related to women and asked the Centre to facilitate an exchange of this type of information within the region. The mass communication media were being increasingly used for education and information about rural life and women.

24. On the subjects of health, nutrition and social services, representatives emphasized the necessity of reinforcing action for protecting of the health of mothers and children by providing the necessary care and nutrition and rehabilitation schemes for the most vulnerable groups.

25. Several representatives reported the establishment in their countries of projects concerned with the improvement of maternal and child health and the creation of day nurseries for working mothers and of rural day-care centres. One representative reported that there was a growing concern in her country about abortions, infanticide and extra-marital pregnancies and that formal discussions had been held on those matters. There was a need to concentrate on water supplies and the protection of springs. Nutrition programmes, and training in food preservation and storage were high on the list of priorities.

26. On the subject of population, several delegations reported increases in family planning services with emphasis on improving the well-being of mothers and children. They noted that a growing number of people now favoured family planning although further efforts in that connexion were needed in rural areas.

27. Concerning research and data collection and analysis, one country had undertaken an overall study of the situation and needs of women in rural areas, covering the availability of water supplies, opportunities for income-generating activities and the effects of polygamy. In another country technologies currently in use in the countryside and villages had been surveyed with the dual aim of revising textbooks for schools so that children might learn from familiar technologies, and of increasing the availability of technologies which were considered most useful and efficient. Studies of customary laws on marriage, divorce, etc., were in process, as were studies on food production, which covered



farm implements, processing technologies, storage facilities and marketing. Participants saw a need for the study of school drop-outs. ATRC<sup>W</sup> was requested to continue and increase its support for research.

28. Delegations reporting on legislation and administrative measures stated that although no discrimination existed in the laws of their countries, greater efforts were needed to implement existing laws which favoured equality and equal opportunities for women and men, particularly in rural areas. On the subject of administration, one representative observed that African women were well-known in the international community as decision-makers. They also held positions at ministerial and ambassadorial level in a number of countries. Ministerial positions were held not only in fields common to women, but also in such fields as commerce, development planning, urban development, and justice. Although an increase in women's participation in international and regional meetings was reported, it was also noted that more resources and channels of resources were needed to increase the numbers of women on international delegations.

29. There was an expressed need for skills in formulating proposals for submission to donor agencies. It was repeatedly stressed that rural women needed more effective organizations; women in urban areas of countries reporting already had organizations or were in the process of forming them.

30. The relation between women elite and rural illiterate women was emphasized. Women elite must become conscious of the need to improve their relations with the masses of women and to work to narrow the gap which separated them.

31. In spite of the progress achieved by various countries in the field of the promotion of women and their active integration in the economic system, there were still several obstacles in that regard. The struggle against inequalities might lose momentum because of a lack of adequate means. Concern was expressed for women and families living in desert areas. Obstacles to the provision of opportunities for women included a shortage of skilled persons in most fields, a lack of funds, and the prevailing attitudes of men and of women themselves. One representative noted that as yet too few persons were willing to articulate the needs of women, and national and regional development continued to lag because half the population was not drawn fully into the development effort. The United Nations specialized agencies were asked to support the implementation of the Plans of Action, and donor agencies were requested to increase the resources available for furthering the people. Information was requested on the number of third world women employed in the United Nations system. The secretariat distributed information on vacant posts in the Economic Commission for Africa. It was suggested that Governments should nominate women candidates for international work.

Future priorities and action for increasing women's participation in Africa's development and strategies to achieve the New International Economic Order and ECA's Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa, 1976 - 1981 - 1986. Agenda Item 2

32. A member of the secretariat summarized the major ideas of ECA on Africa's development strategy. She pointed out that the implementation of a new international economic order necessarily commenced with the reform of African economic

structures, or in other words, with the establishment of new national and regional economic orders. Governments must invest a greater share of their national resources in development activities in rural areas to achieve a viable interdependence between the agricultural and industrial sectors. The basic aims of the development strategy included:

- (a) The deliberate promotion of an increasing measure of self-reliance;
- (b) The acceleration of internally located and relatively autonomous processes of growth and diversification;
- (c) The progressive eradication of unemployment and mass poverty.

#### Promotion of self-reliance

33. Some representatives stressed the need for African countries to lessen their dependence on funds and technologies from industrialized countries. Developing countries must take action to transform their national resources locally with a view to deriving greater profit from them and to promote the use of technology adapted to their realities. In that framework, close economic and technical co-operation among African countries would be more vital than ever because it would enable them to make up for the past which had made them dependent on the industrialized countries rather than interdependent as a region. Such co-operation called for rural reform and the promotion of projects in which the role of women in development was considered to be equally important as that of men.

34. It was felt that the presence of multinational firms in African countries should be studied from the point of view of employment policies and that such firms should yield to national priorities by placing their activities in the framework of development plans and policies of African countries. It was also felt that multinationals should be urged to promote technological transfers in the direction of African countries. Women should be fully associated with the establishment of a new economic order and should therefore receive training aimed at upgrading their qualifications, and giving them greater access to positions of responsibility.

#### Economic growth and diversification

35. The growth and diversification of the economies of African countries could help to limit the migration of skilled persons from rural areas to urban areas and discourage the brain drain to industrialized countries. Local processing of raw materials should be encouraged in order to reduce the importation of products from industrialized countries, to ensure that greater profit was derived from national resources and to create more employment opportunities. Governments must take effective measures to halt the massive exportation of raw materials and to process them locally. Such action should be supported by the organization of campaigns to educate the population and to bring it to

progressively change its current behaviour from consuming imported products to preferring local products.

### Eradication of unemployment and mass poverty

36. The elimination of unemployment and poverty should be one of the major preoccupations of Governments in their national development plans. With that aim in view, African countries should orient themselves towards the decentralization of development activities by creating small industrial units in rural areas with a view to creating employment for rural dwellers, both men and women. That effort should be supported by developing primary education and professional training as well as by setting up an adequate rural infrastructure: roads, electricity, irrigation, sanitary installations and other action to improve the environment and the people's living conditions.

37. Participants stressed the necessity of according agriculture and, above all, food production priority in national development plans. All African countries should endeavour to achieve self-sufficiency in food, and women would have an important role to play in the realization of that objective. Stress was laid on the need for women to gain the right to own land, obtain loans for agriculture and enjoy the fruits of their labour.

38. Several representatives appealed to the United Nations agencies, and particularly to ECA, to assist the African countries in their efforts to restructure their economies, putting priority emphasis on technology. The industrialized countries should be encouraged to contribute their pledged 0.7 per cent of their Gross National Product to development assistance in order to ensure sufficient support of developing countries. They should also continue to relax the stiff conditions they had attached to financial aid and grant more long-term loans at low interest rates. An appeal was made for developed countries to be more receptive to the proposals of the third world in the establishment of the New International Economic Order.

39. From the discussion bearing on this agenda item, the following conclusions emerged:

- (i) There is a close relation between the advancement of women and the establishment of the New International Economic Order;
- (ii) There is a need for the African countries to plan to restructure their economies with a view to integrating women in development, reclaiming their national resources, the orienting of development action toward rural areas and promoting a technology adopted to national conditions;
- (iii) There is a need for co-operation among the African countries and between them and the industrialized countries and for stronger Afro-Arab co-operation.

Establishment of regional machinery to enhance the role of women in the economic and social development of Africa and to promote and guide ECA's Training and Research Centre for Women (Agenda item 3) E/CN.14/ATRCW/77/WD.4/Rev.1

40. This item of the agenda was introduced by a member of the secretariat who reviewed the history of the African Training and Research Centre for Women, its objectives and activities. The secretariat proposed the creation of an Africa regional co-ordinating committee, whose main objective would be to assist national authorities in reinforcing the integration of women in development, and invited the participants to discuss the creation of this committee and to give consideration to its structures and responsibilities.

41. The principle of the promotion of machinery for the integration of women in development was generally accepted. The debate on this topic centred around whether existing bodies should be reinforced and consolidated or whether new machineries should be created to co-ordinate regional and subregional activities for the integration of women in development. Some delegations feared that the activities of such a committee might overlap with those of the Pan African Women's Organization. Some delegations observed that ATRCW was a young institution whose potential remained to be developed. They felt it would be sensible to reinforce its structures and activities rather than to create new machinery.

42. The representative of the secretariat explained that the proposal was not for a new regional centre but for a new machinery which would facilitate the integration of women in development by providing a linkage, at subregional level, between the proposed national co-ordinating structures and the regional structure. Decentralization would be effected under the Centre's authority and within the subregional structure which already existed in ECA.

43. The delegation of Senegal announced its intention to abstain from the discussion of regional machinery because it felt that the proposal was of a political nature and necessitated a ministerial-level decision. That view was supported by delegations of Mali and Guinea. The delegation of the Niger stated that although it had no objection to the creation of a permanent regional committee for Africa, it had reservations about the subregional nature of the machinery proposed.

44. The participants examined the draft terms of reference of the African Regional Standing Committee contained in annex I, part A of document E/CN.14/ATRCW/77/WD.4 and adopted them with some amendments. The amended version is annexed to this report.

National and regional action related to the International Year of the Child (agenda item 4)

45. Agenda item 4 was introduced by the Director of the UNICEF Regional Office for Eastern Africa, who explained that in 1976 the General Assembly had proclaimed the year 1979 International Year of the Child and had designated UNICEF as the

lead agency of the United Nations system responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the International Year of the Child. The aims of the year were to encourage all countries, rich and poor, to review their programmes for promoting the well-being of the child and to provide massive support of local and national action to make decision-makers better aware of the vital tie between programmes for children and economic and social progress.

46. The International Year of the Child would mark the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of the Child. The most certain means of obtaining favourable results from the Year's activities were those which reinforced the commitment of Governments to satisfying the needs of children and increasing their well-being in the years to come. The International Year of the Child should permit emphasis to be placed on the intellectual, psychological and social development of children, without overlooking their physical well-being.

47. One of the reasons why a special Year was needed was that less than 10 per cent of the rural population of the developing countries (203 million people) lived at a distance of 10 kilometres from the nearest health centre. A WHO survey carried out in 91 developing countries indicated that 85 per cent of the rural population did not have safe drinking water. In 1970, 269 million children of primary school age were not attending school as compared with 212 million children in school; estimates for 1985 foresaw 375 million out of school as opposed to 350 million in schools.

48. International Year of the Child must therefore attract attention to the most vulnerable children: poor children in rural zones, the physically and mentally handicapped, orphans, abandoned children and children suffering from malnutrition.

49. The secretariat of the International Year of the Child would do its utmost to provide necessary information about the activities planned for the Year, to encourage the exchange of experiences and to stimulate greater participation. In a letter to all member countries, the Director-General of UNICEF had suggested the creation of national committees or other appropriate bodies that could plan and carry out activities scheduled for the year and obtain the support of citizens.

50. Inter-governmental, international and national organizations of all kinds would be invited to participate actively. The resolution proclaiming the Year affirmed that the concept of basic services for children was a vital component of social and economic development and that it should be supported and implemented by the co-operative efforts of the international and national communities. The main objective of this idea was to find efficient methods of reaching children who were still inaccessible and to provide them with essential services.

51. UNICEF's policy of basic services should be considered as a point of departure to which wider and more complete services would be added as a country's economy develops. Such services would contribute to the development process because they were labour intensive; they quickly resulted in improved living conditions and they introduced various elements in development, such as projects for the construction of roads, irrigation, land improvement, the introduction of technology adapted to village needs and possibilities and the giving of more responsibilities to women.

52. She recommended a more economical system of day-care centres, which was closer to African educational practices, and also noted that problems were raised by the rapid urbanization of certain parts of Africa. She concluded her statement by observing that the child of today is the man of tomorrow and called for action to ensure children regained their place in society.

53. The participants commended the proclamation of 1979 as the Year of the Child and said they hoped that, within the context of the Year, an effort would be made to promote increased awareness of the needs and aspirations of children. The Conference also stressed the need to elaborate national policies for children in the areas of health, education and culture and to plan for the creation of services for the benefit of children.

54. The following proposals were made:

- (i) That structures shall be set up for increasing children's security outside the home;
- (ii) That the Executive Secretary of ECA should put the question of the International Year of the Child on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Committee of ECA;
- (iii) That an appeal should be launched to African and other Governments to strive to attain the aims of the International Year of the Child.
- (iv) That efforts should be made to promote research programmes in the following subjects:
  - (a) New approaches to the problems of illiteracy, malnutrition and poverty;
  - (b) The attitude of women toward motherhood;
  - (c) Breast feeding;
  - (d) The mother-child relationship in rural and urban environments;
  - (e) Sex education;
  - (f) Leisure-time activities of adolescents in an urban environment.

55. Many representatives proposed, for the consideration of African Governments, special holidays honouring children and the mounting of an all-out information campaign prior to International Year of the Child at all levels (local, national, regional and international) to make parents and those in decision-making positions at all levels, aware of the needs and problems of children in the realms of nutrition, preventive hygiene, education, social adaptation and

schooling. They also suggested the elaboration by each country of a special programme for the International Year of the Child with the assistance of regional and inter-regional agencies.

56. It was felt that the International Year of the Child should be a year of regional and international meetings of persons holding decision-making positions in organizations dealing with children and in national, regional and inter-regional agencies dealing with the status of children. The purpose of such meetings should be to exchange information and experience and to plan exhibitions and publications relating to children. In addition, efforts to help children should be strengthened by means of child-care activities and action for the advancement of all children, particularly delinquent or predelinquent children, orphans and handicapped children.

57. It was proposed that measures should be taken to protect children, and especially girls, in certain regions from physical mutilation.

PART THREE

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE

1. Creation of strengthening of national machinery

The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

Recalling the provisions of the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year and resolution 269 (XII) adopted by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on 28 February 1975,

Noting with satisfaction the increasing resources being devoted by Governments and by bilateral and multilateral agencies, including agencies in the United Nations system and non-governmental agencies, to consideration of the contribution of women to development,

1. Urges Governments in the Africa region to continue and intensify their efforts to ensure that provision is made for the promotion of women in all social, economic and cultural plans and programmes;

2. Invites the ECA Conference of Ministers to encourage member States to establish or strengthen their national commissions, bureaux or similar governmental machinery designed to promote the integration of women.

3. Requests the ECA Training and Research Centre for Women to augment its assistance to Governments in the establishment of such machinery and to increase its competence for planning and action.

2. Priority needs of rural women

The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

Considering the vital role women play in the development of African society,

Taking into account that the majority of African women live and work in rural areas,

Noting Resolution 269 (XII) adopted by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on 28 February 1975, urging the Governments of



member States to pay attention to the potential of women as essential human resources for the development effort by providing them, especially in rural areas, with appropriate education and training,

Urges the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa and the General Conference and Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to pay special attention to the plight of rural women by organizing integrated rural development programmes based on the actual situation and needs of each of their member countries and to make recommendations to Governments concerning the planning and implementation of programmes and projects in relating to functional literacy and vocational training, including training in modernized farming techniques and animal husbandry; facilities for income-generating activities; appropriate technologies for the improvement of the quality of life; loans and credits; the promotion of indigenous small-scale industries; budgeting and home management and easier access to health services and to adequate nutrition.

### 3. African Women and the New International Economic Order

#### The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

Recalling General Assembly Resolution 3201 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 on the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and Resolution 3202 (S-VI) / the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order,

Recalling also the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, which contains the principle that it is necessary to establish and implement with urgency the New International Economic Order,

Welcoming the initiative taken by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa in consultation with its member States in preparing a revised Framework of principles for the implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa, 1976 - 1981 - 1986,

Concerned that this framework of principles does not give full consideration to the role of women in the implementation of a new economic order in Africa,

1. Urges Governments to give recognition to the role of women, the deliberate promotion of an increasing measure of self-reliance, the acceleration of an internally located and relatively autonomous process of growth and diversification, and the progressive eradication of unemployment and mass poverty,

2. Recommends that strategies for national development should include specific measures to ensure that the full potentials of women are utilized and rewarded in all activities including those related to agriculture and rural

transformation and that recognition is given to their actual contribution to national development;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to submit guidelines to ensure the inclusion of African women in the planning and implementation of the principles of the New International Economic Order to the next session of the Conference of Ministers for their consideration with a view to the adoption of appropriate measures.

4. Establishment of an African Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development

The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

Recalling the provisions of the Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development adopted for the Region of the Economic Commission for Africa in which reference is made to the establishment of machinery, including an African Regional Standing Committee to co-ordinate the work of the national commissions, advise the Women's Programme of the Economic Commission for Africa and to co-operate with international and regional organizations, especially the All-Africa Women's Conference,

Recalling also the provisions of the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year in June 1975 which called upon the United Nations regional commissions to stimulate interest in the plan and to provide Governments and non-governmental organizations with the support they need to carry out the plans and recommended that regional commissions establish machinery to do this, possibly by setting up a standing committee of experts from nations in the region,

Aware of the great need for an integrated organizational machinery within the administrative structure of the Economic Commission for Africa which would be responsible for planning and programming from the regional and subregional to the national level,

1. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to consult the Commissions Council of Ministers with a view to taking the necessary action for the establishment, as provided for in the document entitled "Structure and Terms of Reference of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development", which is annexed to this report:

- (i) At the regional level, of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development;

- (ii) At the subregional level, committees on the implementation of plans of action for the integration of women in development within the framework of the existing Multi-national Programming and Operational Centres based at Lusaka, Yaoundé, Gisenyi, Niamey and Tangier.

2. Recommends that the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development, of which the current Conference is considered to be the first session, be convened once every three years in order to review progress and make proposals in respect of the activities of the African Training and Research Centre for Women in particular and of the integration of women in development in general and that the reports and recommendations adopted by this Conference at each of its sessions be submitted to the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa through the Executive Secretary of the Commission.

3. Further recommends that the next session of the Conference should be held, exceptionally, in 1979 in view of the Economic and Social Council resolution 2062 (LXII) of 12 May 1977, in which the regional commissions were invited to consider ways and means of contributing effectively to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, 1980, including the possibility of holding before 1980 regional seminars or meetings on the themes of the Conference.

5. Strengthening the resources of the African Training and Research centre for Women

The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

Bearing in mind the major contribution made by the African Training and Research Centre for Women towards the integration of women in development,

Aware that the Centre can function properly only if it has adequate qualified staff for the effective planning and implementation of programmes at all levels,

Urges United Nations member States to ensure that the African Training and Research Centre for Women is provided with adequate personnel and budgetary resources within the United Nations' regular budget to accelerate its field activities particularly those related to rural women.

6. International Year of the Child

The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

Noting with appreciation the designation of 1979 as the International Year of the Child and the initiative taken by the United Nations Children's Fund

in alerting world opinion to the necessity of taking special measures to improve the condition of children,

Recognizing the urgent need for the developing countries to provide basic services for children as an essential component of economic and social development and to ensure the health and well-being of future generations,

1. Urges African Governments to participate actively in the International Year of the Child by:

- (i) Formulating programmes for adequate health services, nutrition and basic educational facilities for children as an integral part of their economic and social development plans;
- (ii) Paying special attention to the provision of adequate facilities for poor children living in rural zones and urban slums, physically and mentally handicapped children, orphans, abandoned children and children suffering from malnutrition;
- (iii) Conducting a study of traditional and cultural practices that are detrimental to the physical and mental growth of children with a view to taking the measures needed to eradicate such practices;
- (iv) Providing day-care facilities, with priority being given to the under-privileged sectors of society;
- (v) Setting up national commissions or other appropriate bodies to plan and implement activities for the well-being of children.

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to bring this resolution to the attention of the Executive Committee of the Commission scheduled to meet from 10 to 12 October 1977.

### 7. Situation in countries of Southern Africa

#### The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

1. Notes with satisfaction the victorious outcome of the struggle for independence in Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique;

2. Expresses grave concern that the minority racist regimes of Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa are continuing to oppress millions of men, women and children, who are denied their rightful place in their own countries as well as in international meetings and conferences;

3. Strongly urges all Governments, especially African Governments, to take all the measures required to put an end to these regimes.

8. The struggle of the Palestinian People

The Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development,

1. Deplores the situation of the Palestinian people;

2. Gives its support to the resolutions adopted by the Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity and the General Assembly of the United Nations concerning the struggle of the Palestinian people.

9. Motion of thanks to the President and people of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania

The Regional Conference on the Implementation of the National, Regional and World Plans of Action for the Integration of Women in Development,

Expresses its deep gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency Moktar Ould Daddah, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and to the Government and people of Mauritania for hosting the Conference, for the very warm reception and the generous hospitality which they accorded the participating delegations during their stay in Mauritania and for making it possible for the Conference to organize its work efficiently;

Also, expresses its gratitude to the President and First Lady of Mauritania for their very positive contribution to the serenity in which the Conference has been conducted;

Requests the Chairman of the Conference to convey the sense of this motion to the President, the Government, and the people of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

## A N N E X

### STRUCTURE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE AFRICA REGIONAL CO ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

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In document E/CN.14/ATRCO/77/WD.4 entitled "Possible regional machinery to promote co-operation and co-ordination in Africa," two alternative regional structures were advanced:

- (i) The Africa Regional Standing Committee;
- (ii) The Africa Organization for Women in Development, an independent body whose constitution and terms of reference were spelt out in annex II of the basic document.

#### Revised structure of the regional machinery

After considering this document, the Conference envisaged strengthening the field activities currently carried out by the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW), decentralizing its activities to the national and subregional levels and creating a three-tiered machinery (national, subregional and regional) and integrating it into the administrative system of the Economic Commission for Africa.

At the national level, the national commissions and/or women's bureaux, councils and other national machinery established by Governments would constitute the focal points.

At the subregional level, a committee on the integration of women in development would be established in each subregion. Each of these committees would function within the framework of the ECA Multinational Programming and Operational Centre (MULPOC) operating in the same subregion. These Centres are based at:

- (a) LUSAKA, for eastern and southern African countries;
- (b) YAOUNDE and GISENYI for the countries in the Central African subregion;
- (c) NIAMEY, for countries in the West African subregion;
- (d) TANGIER, for countries in the North African subregion.

At the regional level, an African regional co-ordinating committee for the integration of women in development would be constituted for the purpose of:

- (i) Assisting in building up institutions and programmes especially designed to promote the participation of women in development;

- (ii) Assessing the changing conditions of women;
- (iii) Setting standards and establishing legal models.

Constitution and terms of reference of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development

The Regional Co-ordinating Committee would be constituted as follows:

- (a) The Executive Secretary of ECA or his representative, in an ex-officio capacity;
- (b) The Administrative Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity or his representative,
- (c) The Secretary-General of the Pan African Women's Organization or her representative;
- (d) Representatives from two countries of each subregion to serve for two years, and the Chairman of each of the Subregional Committees.
- (e) The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development;
- (f) Representatives of major donors to the programme activities of ATRCWI, as observers;
- (g) Representatives of United Nations specialized agencies and other bodies, who shall be invited as observers if a particular subject under discussion is of interest to them;
- (h) The Chief Technical Co-ordinator of ATRCWI, who shall be an ex-officio member and shall act as Secretary of the Committee.

During its first session convened under the aegis of ECA, the Committee shall elect its own Chairman and define the period of her tenure.

The tasks of the Committee should be inter alia:

- (a) To assist and advise ECA in its activities directed towards the integration of women in development in relation to those of Governments and other agencies in the region and to co-ordinate the activities of the Subregional Committees;
- (b) To co-operate with the Inter-Agency Working Group established to implement the plan of action for the integration of women in development in Africa;

- (c) To co-operate with relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, in particular the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Social Development and other regional commissions;
- (d) To co-operate with other relevant inter-governmental agencies, especially, the Pan African Women's Organization;
- (e) In co-operating with ATRCW and national machinery created to promote the integration of women in development in Africa:
  - (i) To initiate country studies and assist national institutions in identifying the types of information needed for a proper understanding of the situation of women and the factors facilitating or limiting their advancement;
  - (ii) To assist with the design and implementation of surveys carried out for the purpose of collecting data and other information;
  - (iii) To provide clearing-house facilities within ATRCW for the exchange of information apt to facilitate co-ordination and mutual support among programmes designed to promote the advancement of women at various levels and for the sharing of relevant experiences among the countries of the region.
- (f) In conjunction with regional statistical bodies and other international bodies, to provide guidance concerning methods of reporting on the situation of women and on the development of indicators for assessing the progress made towards the goals enunciated in the Plan of Action.
- (g) To engage in any other activities designed to further the objectives of the Committee.

The Committee shall be empowered to make recommendations on any matter within its competence directly to the Governments of members or associate members of the Economic Commission for Africa and to the United Nations specialized and voluntary agencies operating in the region.

After consultation with the ECA secretariat, the Committee may establish such sub-committees as it deems appropriate for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities.

The Committee shall meet at least once a year and its Chairman may, in special circumstances, convene emergency meetings. In years when the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa is scheduled to meet, the Committee shall meet at least one week prior to the opening of the Conference.



The rules of procedure of the Committee shall be the same as those of the Economic Commission for Africa.

ATRCU shall act as the secretariat of the Committee with staff assigned to that task by ECA.

The working languages of the Committee shall be those of the Economic Commission for Africa. Statements made in any of these working languages shall be interpreted into the other working languages.

The first session of the Committee shall be called by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa as soon as practicable. The Committee shall, at each session, decide the venue of its next session.

Terms of reference of the Subregional Committees:

The Subregional Committees shall:

- (a) Receive and review proposals submitted by the national commissions on women and development or by similar bodies responsible for ensuring the integration of women in all sectors of national development, with a view to obtaining technical and financial assistance for the implementation projects;
- (b) Disseminate information and deal with matters relating to mass communications;
- (c) Exchange knowledge and experience through workshops, seminars, study tours and other types of technical meeting;
- (d) Ensure that subregional development programmes provide fully for the integration of women in development;
- (e) Initiate country studies and assist national institutions to identify the types of information needed for a proper understanding of the situation of women and the factors facilitating or limiting the advancement of women;
- (f) Assist in the design and implementation of surveys carried out for the purpose of collecting statistical data and other information;
- (g) Provide clearing-house facilities for the exchange of information apt to promote co-ordination and mutual support among programmes designed to promote the advancement of women at various levels and for the sharing of relevant experience among the countries of the subregion.

Institutionalization of the Conference on the Integration of Women in Development

The Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development, of which the Conference held in Nouakchott from 27 September to 2 October 1977 was considered to be the first session, shall be convened once every three years in order to review the progress of and make proposals in respect of the activities of ATRCW in particular and of the integration of women in development in general. Its report and recommendations shall be submitted to the ECA Conference of Ministers through the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa.

The theme and the Agenda of the Conference, and all other matters relating to its preparation, shall be the responsibility of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development.