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COMMITTEE II

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

held at Africa Hall, Addis Ababa,  
on Wednesday, 26 February 1964, at 3.10 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ZAYAITI (Tunisia)

Secretary: Mr. STAMENKOVIC

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## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TRENDS IN AFRICA AND REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (agenda item 5)

(e) (iv) Housing (E/CN.14/251) (concluded)

Mr. BAKI (Algeria) stressed the need for practical advice, instead of broad, general or detailed specialist studies. The secretariat ought to examine the problems of one country, or a group of countries with similar geographic and social conditions, and suggests immediately applicable solutions.

Algeria had ten million inhabitants of whom only three million lived in modern dwellings. Immediately after the war, which had greatly aggravated Algeria's housing problem, his Government had embarked on a policy of providing credit for rehousing the homeless; it had allocated NF.200 million for housing in 1963, and proposed to make available substantial amounts in the future. Owing to the disorganization consequent upon the departure of almost all foreign technicians and to the many urgent problems that confronted his Government, it had been impossible to prepare a detailed housing programme, though the Government hoped to do so shortly if ECA could provide assistance.

The urgent housing problem in Africa could only be solved by government action. The State must take over most housing, and encourage the formation of building co-operatives and provide them with credit facilities and land.

Such co-operatives had been established in Algeria. In addition, the nationalization of land had enabled the Algerian Government to embark upon a full-scale policy of town and planning.

Algeria had supplies of many raw materials, but needed to set up new factories to provide its own manufactured goods; it hoped to do so jointly with neighbouring countries with similar problems. Until Algeria was in a position to train its own technicians it would be grateful for any assistance the secretariat could provide in that field.

Mr. TOURE (Guinea) said that the African States could solve their urgent housing problems either by preparing long-term housing plans, or by improving existing traditional housing. Guinea had chosen the second alternative, which enabled it to use the country's primary resources and to save foreign currency.

Traditional housing was of two types, urban and rural, the former of which required improvement. Guinea had set up factories for the manufacture of bricks, roof-tiles and floor-tiles, in order to reduce its imports of foreign corrugated iron and tiles. It had also started to build a factory for the manufacture of concrete. His Government had initiated a credit scheme for enabling less well-paid members of the community to improve their housing; it had also imported prefabricated houses from Holland, but was using local wood in erecting them to save foreign currency. He suggested that ECA should examine the possibilities of assisting countries that were improving traditional housing.

Mr. RUSSELL (WHO), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that WHO had a long-standing interest in housing. Since 1961, increasing interest had been displayed in the subject, both by the Bureau of Social Affairs at United Nations Headquarters and by WHO, which had been working in close co-operation with ECA on housing questions in Africa. In 1963 it had been decided that a WHO public health engineer should be appointed to work with the Housing, Building and Planning Section of the ECA secretariat. The major task of the housing team would be to examine different types of traditional housing and house construction, and to ascertain how healthy, modern, low-cost housing might be developed. Many different attempts to produce durable low-cost housing had been made in Africa in the past; they would all have to be examined.

WHO was also interested in the problems of rural housing in Africa and would be carrying out a rural housing survey in its Eastern Mediterranean Region, which included Ethiopia. In that, as in other matters concerned with African housing, WHO would work in close co-operation with ECA.

Mr. TURIN (Secretariat) drew the Committee's attention to the Report of the Second session of the ECOSOC Housing and Planning Committee (E/3838, E/C.6/25) and to the Report's covering note prepared by the United Nations Bureau of Social Affairs.

Summarizing the main trends of the discussion, he said that emphasis had been laid on the need to define targets for national housing policies and short-and long-term housing programmes. Several representatives had referred to the difficulty of financing housing programmes, and there had been general agreement that governments and local authorities must play an important part, in providing housing for the lower income groups. ECA had been asked to devote more attention to the problem of developing production of local materials, so as to reduce imports of building materials. Emphasis had been laid on the desirability of improving traditional housing; and, although it had been recognized that urban housing problems might have to be given priority, the Committee felt that rural housing must not be neglected.

He regretted the fact that that criticism of ECA for engaging in general and specialized studies, deserved, though the criticism might be, should have come from the only member country that had received direct assistance from it, namely Algeria. ECA was always ready to help individual countries, so far as it was able; but its main function was to act as a catalyst.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee take note of the Report on Work in Housing, Building and Planning (E/CN.14/251), together with the points which had been raised during discussion, also of the Report of the Second session of the ECOSOC Housing and Planning Committee (E/3838, E/C.6/25).

It was so decided.

(g) Public administration (E/CN.14/254)

Mr. LABERGE (Secretariat), introducing the Report on Activities in Public Administration (E/CN.14/254), said that the Public Administration Division, being a new division, had not as yet made a great impact in Africa. Its function was to improve the machinery of government by strengthening the civil service and training facilities and streamlining the practices and procedures of government operations.

In 1963, 22 countries had received technical assistance in public administration from 72 experts, and the following regional projects had been carried out : a study tour of training and civil service facilities in Africa; a training course for foreign-service officers; a study tour, for local government officials, to Yugoslavia and India; and a training course for English-speaking customs officials in West Africa. The Programme of Work and Priorities envisaged a stepping up of regional projects in 1964/65.

He drew the Committee's attention to the advisory services the secretariat could provide at the request of governments. In 1963, six short-term missions had been sent out, dealing with budget and taxation administration, organization and methods. As the Public Administration Division expanded, it was hoped that that branch of the secretariat's activities would be extended.

M. HAMID (Sudan) stressed the need for seminars on public administration, because all the newly independent countries were confronted with the basic problem of replacing metropolitan officials with local administrators. Independence was not effective until the civil service had been adapted, in structure and spirit to the new conditions. A temporary lowering of standards in public administration was unavoidable; but if sufficient efforts were made, it need not be prolonged.

His country had participated in local government study tours, for senior officials, to Yugoslavia and India. The practical knowledge gained from such tours was invaluable; he hoped that further tours would be arranged.

He appreciated the help ECA had given to various African governments by providing them with public administration experts and consultants. His Government welcomed the fact that ECA, in its programme of work, attached great importance to the administrative problems of planning. Without training courses in public administration, the governments of Africa would be unable to find the necessary administrative staff. His Government had organized local seminars and training courses in public administration, and there were public administration courses at the School of Law in Khartoum.

With United Nations assistance Sudan had set up an Institute of Public Administration, which trained middle-grade civil servants and provided a forum for discussion for senior officials.

He suggested that the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning might run courses in public administration, laying special emphasis on the organization and methods of administration.

Mr. SAVI DE TOVE (Togo) suggested that ECA might be asked to assist African countries to standardize, wherever possible, their customs nomenclatures and procedures.

Mr. BAKI (Algeria) said that administrative decentralization was a luxury which the developing countries could not at present afford. He suggested that the secretariat should examine the problem of centralizing administration in the region, taking into account social, political and economic conditions. He believed there was an urgent need for setting up a sub-regional administrative training centre.

Mr. BROUGH (Kenya) thanked ECA for the assistance East Africa had received in the field of public administration.

His Government had set up an Institute of Administration at which more than 300 students were being trained in various aspects of local and central administration. The Institute ran courses for senior as well as for lower-grade civil servants. His Government would welcome students from other African countries at the courses.

The three East African governments were also considering setting up an East African Staff College; his Government would be glad if other African countries wished to be associated with the venture.

Mr. PECRIAUX (France) observed that an efficient administration was a pre-requisite for the successful execution of any development plan. He welcomed ECA's decision to convene, in 1964, a meeting of directors of public administration institutes, as a first step towards examining ways and means of adapting administrative structures to development requirements.

In the endeavour to secure simple and efficient administration, three points should be borne in mind. In the first place, administrative

structures must be suited to implementation of the development plans; close contact ought to be maintained between local and central authorities. Secondly, administrative methods must be flexible. Thirdly, it was necessary to instil into administrative personnel a sense of public service.

He suggested the establishment of multi-purpose training institutes at the national or sub-regional level to train civil servants who had not received any specialized education. Africa already possessed secondary teaching establishments which might form a nucleus for training of that kind. In any event, it was essential that such training should be given in Africa; the traditional European and North American training institutes were not suitable for the training of African administrators.

The CHAIRMAN invited representatives of specialized agencies to address the Committee.

The Training Section's next problem was the filling of vacancies in training institutions. Some African technical faculties had more teaching staff than students. It appeared that, while many countries were prepared to accept trainees, few were ready to send them to other African countries. In many cases students were sent to institutes outside Africa, where they often had to learn a new language before beginning their studies.

Africa already possessed 41 institutes, and yet requests for help in establishing others were frequently received. The important thing was to use existing training facilities to the best advantage. He accordingly invited members to submit the names of candidates for training to the secretariat, so that the secretariat could gradually build up a register of requests for training. At the same time each country should draw up a manpower budget, with projections showing to what extent it could meet its own future needs for trained personnel. Periodic questionnaires would be sent to each country, so that the secretariat might have up-to-date knowledge of requirements. National correspondents should be appointed, to ensure that the questionnaires were answered. The question whether or not expatriate staff were needed, could be answered by laying down minimum qualifications for each post, and calculating the number of suitable national candidates at any given time. Eventually the questionnaire would be refined to elicit precise information about the need for expatriate personnel. The register kept in Ghana indicating how many qualified persons, such as doctors, would be available each year, illustrated the kind of thing he had in mind.

Mr. RIANASOLOMANA (Madagascar) said that his Government had already set up a commission for training and employment. It would adopt the measures suggested by the Executive Secretary.

Mr. BRIGHT (Liberia) referring to paragraph 13(f) of the Report on ECA Training Activities (E/CN.14/258), pointed out that his country was not yet using the Brussels Nomenclature.

He suggested that the secretariat should also arrange courses on road engineering and surveying. The Executive Secretary's suggestions would

Mr. REYNAUD (ILO) said that ILO could provide assistance in the organization of Ministries of Labour, including the organization of such public institutions as social security services, and in the training of middle-grade personnel for public institutions. For example, a team specializing in administration had been sent to the Congo (Leopoldville) to help the Congolese Government set up its Ministry of Labour.

Mr. OCHS (UNESCO) pointed out that UNESCO's mandate in public administration covered training at university level and the equivalent. UNESCO had been associated with the ECA training programme in a survey of North Africa in 1963; it was also interested in the meeting of directors of public administration institutes to be held in May 1964, and would help with the preparations for the meeting. It was essential to bear in mind that public administration training must always be related to educational planning in all its forms.

Mr. KONE (Mali and Mauritania) said that Mali and Mauritania would greatly appreciate the organization of a group to study the harmonization of customs legislation.

Schools of administration had been set up in many African countries and their work ought to be co-ordinated.

Mr. LABERGE (Secretariat) said he was pleased to see the interest shown in research. Research programmes were required before training courses or missions were arranged.

The interest expressed in the proposed meeting of directors of public administration institutes was gratifying; he hoped that many experts and delegates would attend the meeting. The problem of public administration and that of training being inseparable, both problems would be discussed at the meeting.

The secretariat had examined the possibility of including public administration in the syllabus of the Dakar Institute of Economic Development and Planning, but had decided that other subjects deserved a higher priority. Public administration might, however, be included at a later stage.

Regarding the question of decentralization, raised by the Algerian representative, he felt that each case ought to be studied in the light of

local conditions. Preliminary research was needed to decide whether central or local administration were more suited to conditions in any particular country.

He thanked the representative of Kenya for his description of Kenya's public administration training programme, and hoped that Kenya would make a substantial contribution at the meeting of directors of public administration institutes. He welcomed Kenya's offer to receive foreign students for training.

He thanked the observer for France for his comments; they would be borne in mind when future programmes were drawn up. The suggestion that multi-purpose institutes should be set up at the national or sub-regional level was particularly interesting.

He was pleased to note that the ILO and UNESCO would continue to work in close collaboration with ECA.

Mr. ALLEN (Secretariat) reminded the Committee, in connection with the Togo representative's reference to the need for standardization of customs nomenclatures and procedures, that the Executive Secretary had recently invited eleven countries to attend a study group on the standardization of customs and tariff nomenclatures.

Some progress could be made in 1964 in connection with the point raised by the representative of Mali and Mauritania: an expert study of common transit procedures and customs legislation was to be carried out in West Africa.

(i) Training (E/CN.14/258)

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY said that the new Training Section would not deal with formal schooling, but would concentrate on vocational and technical training. Its first task would be to produce a handbook on existing training programmes and courses. Letters had been sent to all members and associate members asking for information on the facilities they could offer. Letters had also been sent to foundations and bi-lateral and multi-lateral agencies. The handbook would be compiled on a basis of the replies received; he hoped replies would be sent in as soon as possible.

be conveyed to his Government.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY said that it was not ECA's intention to run all types of courses itself. Paragraph 13 of the Report was meant simply as an illustration. ECA would receive requests and try to direct candidates to suitable courses.

Ato ASSEFAW LEGGESE (Ethiopia) said his Government would comply with the Executive Secretary's requests. While noting the difficulties that had arisen in implementing Commission resolution 77(V), he nevertheless congratulated the Training Section on its achievements. He appreciated the contributions made by the United Nations and other bodies, and hoped that more regional projects would be carried out in the future.

It was important that the handbook the Section was going to produce should contain very full information, including guidance on the selection of suitable candidates. Alternative candidates should always be available in case the original appointee fell out.

He welcomed the assistance provided by the Training Section in the co-ordination of bi-lateral programmes. The Section must continue to draw attention to its facilities, so that all offers and requests might be channelled through the secretariat.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY urged members to send in requests even before the handbook appeared. If an application on behalf of a particular candidate had already been made elsewhere, that fact should be stated, in case another candidate was prevented from obtaining a place.

Mr. KING (Sierra Leone) thought that the reason why certain countries preferred to send students abroad was that insufficient information was available about the quality and standards of equivalent African institutions. ECA might perhaps describe the sort of facilities and standards of instruction available in Africa, to assist governments in placing their candidates.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY pointed out that African universities and institutes were so closely modelled on metropolitan types that standards were comparable, while facilities were often better. Governments could

always check with specialized agency representatives in their country. He felt that Africa ought to have confidence in African institutions.

Mr. REYNAUD (ILO), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that his Organisation concerned itself with all vocational training problems. A complete up-to-date list of its African projects had recently been sent to the secretariat. ILO devoted half of all its training funds to vocational training. Constant co-operation was maintained with UNESCO, which concentrated on school education, whereas ILO dealt with young people who had received no technical education, and with working adults.

It was important that vocational training should always be adapted to actual needs, to ensure that work was available for the personnel after it had been trained.

ILO could advise governments on the creation or re-organization of training systems, the organization of vocational training programmes and surveys, the establishment of priorities, and the setting up of co-ordinating bodies at the national, regional or local level. It could also provide assistance for the organization of in-service training, crash-programmes for adult workers and refresher courses for the up-grading of workers.

In conclusion, he drew attention to the International Vocational and Technical Training Centre for the Developing Countries recently set up in Turin. By 1965 the Centre would be able to take 600 trainees a year; eventually it would be able to take 2,000.

Mr. DARWISH (United Arab Republic) said that all training facilities in his country were at the disposal of the Executive Secretary. The latter's suggestions would be put into effect immediately.

Mr. BAILLY (Ivory Coast) thought that the chief objection to sending trainees out of Africa was that they lost contact with African realities. He accordingly agreed that African institutions ought to be used as extensively as possible. His Government would comply with the Executive Secretary's requests.

Mr. KONE (Mali and Mauritius) said that he had taken note of the Executive Secretary's suggestions. He hoped that it might be possible for the Executive Secretary to study means of converting Mali's School of Animal Husbandry into an Institute.

Mr. BAZABAS (Niger) associated himself with the wish expressed by the previous speaker.

Mr. SEBTI (Morocco) stated that his country would act upon the Executive Secretary's suggestions. He hoped that the handbook would be very detailed, since trainees were often sent abroad on account of lack of information about African facilities. Morocco wished to offer the facilities of all its vocational and technical training schools to students from other African countries, and would send Moroccan trainees to their institutions.

Mr. TOURE (Guinea) asked for information about the average length of training periods for officials.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY replied that the length of a training course depended on the candidates' initial qualifications and the standards required by the institutions. In the Congo (Brazzaville), for instance, badly needed medical assistants had been sent to medical schools for a three-year period in order to qualify as doctors; more than 60 doctors had been trained in that way since independence. The important thing was to balance present needs against future requirements.

A point to be borne in mind that administrative officers were only a superstructure; they needed skilled men below them. Ghana had found it easier to replace highly qualified ex-patriates than to replace technicians and foremen. Attention should always be paid to the training of middle and lower grade technicians.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.