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ECONOMIC COMMISSION
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Fifth Meeting of the Executive Committee

Addis Ababa, 24-28 May 1971

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FIRST MEETING
OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS**

Introduction

1. Following the first meeting of the Conference of Ministers held at Tunis, Tunisia, from 8 to 13 February 1971, this document has been drawn up to facilitate the study by the Executive Committee of the necessary action to implement the resolutions and decisions taken by the Conference.
2. Action to be taken by member States or the United Nations is listed under the main decisions of the Conference.

Regional structures within the United Nations system

3. In resolution 217(X), the Conference of Ministers requested member States which had not sent in their replies to the Secretary-General's questionnaire to transmit them to the Executive Secretary not later than 30 April 1971.
4. It further requested the Executive Secretary to render such advisory services to member States as might be requested by any of them in connexion with the questionnaire.
5. It urged the Executive Secretary to prepare, with the help of the Executive Committee, a report on the regional structures, in the light of the views and recommendations submitted by individual member States, and to transmit the report together with the replies of Governments to the Secretary-General.

Africa's strategy for development in the 1970s

6. In resolution 218(X), the Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary to initiate consultations with regional bodies and other United Nations organizations with a view to establishing machinery for evaluating progress at the regional level.

Economic research and planning

7. The Conference of Ministers, in resolution 220(X), urged all member States to improve their practices in presenting economic data and in preparing and modifying development plans.

8. It requested the Executive Secretary to continue to render all possible assistance to member States in the fields of planning and economic surveys, especially in training economic planners, economic analysts, etc.

9. It further requested the Executive Secretary to continue to improve the content of the annual Economic Survey of the region and to prepare Summaries of Data for the individual countries of Africa on an annual basis.

Economic co-operation

10. In resolution 221(X), the Conference of Ministers urged the Executive Secretary to pursue vigorously and intensify the new policy of decentralization of the activities of the Commission.

11. It invited the United Nations and its agencies to provide the Commission's secretariat with adequate resources to enable it to achieve a greater degree of decentralization and to create an adequate number of Multinational Inter-Disciplinary Development Advisory Teams, including counterpart officers from the countries concerned.

12. It requested the Executive Secretary to continue to strengthen the secretariat's relations with the inter-governmental organizations for economic co-operation, and more particularly to assist them to identify their best opportunities for economic co-operation, and to strengthen their institutional machinery for that purpose.

Third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

13. In resolution 222(X), the Conference of Ministers endorsed the recommendation of the Fifth ECA/OAU Joint Meeting on Trade and Development that a ministerial meeting of African countries should be convened to discuss issues to be placed on the agenda of a ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 and at the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

14. It requested the Executive Secretary, in close co-operation with the Administrative Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to assist member States to organize the African ministerial meeting.

15. It further requested the Executive Secretary to lend all assistance to member States during the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development with a view to co-ordinating the positions of African countries among themselves and with the other developing countries.

Intra-African trade

16. In resolution 222(X), the Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary to prepare documentation for the consideration of African Governments, paying special attention to:

- (a) Identification of products suitable for trading among African countries;
- (b) Problems arising in trade policy;
- (c) Problems arising in respect of administrative and trade procedures;
- (d) Trade promotion;
- (e) Payments problems;
- (f) The establishment of a system of preferences among African countries.

17. It recommended that in carrying out projects with a view to expanding intra-African trade the Executive Secretary should be entitled, in consultation with African Governments, to set up working groups and convene meetings, including confidential unofficial bilateral consultations in conjunction with meetings of the Conference of Ministers.

Africa Trade Centre

18. In resolution 222(X), the Conference of Ministers endorsed the recommendation of the Fifth ECA/OAU Joint Meeting on Trade and Development that:

- (a) More resources should be placed at the disposal of the Africa Trade Centre to enable it to expand its activities, particularly as regards training oriented towards the expansion of intra-African trade and in the field of advisory services;
- (b) Closer co-ordination should be established between the Africa Trade Centre and the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre with a view to avoiding duplication;

- (c) More emphasis should be laid by the Africa Trade Centre on problems of Africanization and the restructuring of commercial sectors in the region;
- (d) Efforts should be made by the Africa Trade Centre to establish an association of African trade promotion organizations, such as associations of exporters.

Commodity trade

19. In resolution 222(X), the Conference of Ministers recommended that the Executive Secretary should assist African countries in harmonizing their policy positions with regard to primary commodities, and help them to promote measures at the international level with a view to ensuring remunerative and stable prices and facilitating the access of their primary commodities to the markets of developed countries.

20. It further recommended that the Executive Secretary should undertake a study of the prices of raw materials imported by African countries and their impact on the economic development of Africa.

21. It requested the Executive Secretary to lend all necessary assistance to African countries wishing to initiate consultations on specific commodities.

Special measures in favour of the least developed among the developing countries

22. In resolution 222(X), the Conference of Ministers reaffirmed Commission's resolution 210(IX) of 14 February 1969 on special measures in favour of the least developed among the developing countries and in particular the recommendation that a special United Nations programme should be established in favour of such countries.

23. It requested the Executive Secretary to follow closely the work of, and give all necessary assistance to, the African members of the group of experts of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

24. It further requested the Executive Secretary to examine any concrete measures which might be decided upon in favour of the least developed among the developing countries, and to ensure that such measures were adapted to the economic development of African countries.

Natural resources

25. In resolution 223(X), the Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary, as a matter of urgency, to secure the necessary financial resources and the requisite staff to enable the secretariat to provide assistance to member States for the training of personnel, improvement of administrative machinery, policy formulation and exploration, and the exploitation and marketing of their mineral resources.

The Human Environment

26. In resolution 224(X), the Conference of Ministers recommended that Governments of member States:

- (a) Take all necessary measures, with the assistance of the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, to secure the effective participation of African nations in that conference;
- (b) Encourage all forms of co-operation through the Commission's secretariat in connexion with the forthcoming conference, and in particular the seminar to be held at Addis Ababa;
- (c) Immediately alert public opinion in African countries as to the importance of environmental problems and their inter-relationships with problems of development.

27. It requested the Executive Secretary to keep African Governments informed of preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment.

Energy

28. In resolution 225(X), the Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary to convene as soon as possible, and not later than 1972, the African conference on the petroleum industry originally scheduled for 1976, and to seek the necessary funds for that purpose.

Trans-African Highway

29. In resolution 226(X), the Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary in agreement with the Governments of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda, to consider the establishment of a committee to study the feasibility of the project and the improvements and alterations that would have to be made in existing stretches of the Trans-African highway and the construction of additional link-roads.

30. It called upon the United Nations Development Programme, the African Development Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to study what form of assistance they could provide for the implementation of the project and to consider the possibility of creating flows of trade among the countries traversed by the highway.

31. It requested the Executive Secretary to help in the establishment of the Trans-African Highway Committee and to take all appropriate steps to interest investors with a view to mobilizing financial and technical resources in industrialized countries and to securing the necessary international assistance.

African development fund

32. In resolution 227(X), the Conference of Ministers recommended that the Governments of member States should give their full support to the African Development Bank's efforts towards establishing an African development fund in the near future.

33. It invited the President of the African Development Bank to maintain consultations and collaboration with the Commission and other international agencies concerned in the project.

34. It requested the Executive Secretary to maintain co-operation with and support for the African Development Bank.

Monetary and financial co-operation

35. In resolution 228(X), the Conference of Ministers urged member States to take the opportunity afforded by the meetings of the Association of African Central Banks and those of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the African Development Bank for consultations and harmonization of views and positions on international monetary problems.

36. It requested the Executive Secretary, in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, to assist the African delegations and representatives at meetings of the organizations concerned, with a view to co-ordinating their positions on various issues.

37. It further requested the Executive Secretary, in co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, to continue to assist other African organizations to adopt a common stand on issues discussed at the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

ECA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division

38. In resolution 229(X), the Conference of Ministers called on the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Director-General of FAO to give high priority to the completion of the studies proposed in the programme of work of the ECA/FAO Joint Agriculture Division and to make every possible effort to obtain both multilateral and bilateral assistance for the completion of such studies prior to the date scheduled.

39. It recommended that the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity, should call meetings of Government representatives from the various sub-regions to discuss the gradual removal of all barriers to intra-African trade in agricultural commodities.

Population

40. In resolution 230(X), the Conference of Ministers invited the Executive Secretary to speed up the establishment of sub-regional centres for the training of demographers.

41. It requested the Executive Secretary, as part of the Commission's work programme, to carry out a study of population levels and trends in relation to economic and social development.

42. It further requested the Executive Secretary, as part of the Commission's work programme, to prepare a demographic manual containing concepts and definitions suitable for African countries.

Statistics

43. In resolution 231(X), the Conference of Ministers urged African Governments to take all steps necessary for the introduction of the United Nations System of National Accounts and related statistical systems without delay.

44. It requested the Executive Secretary to arrange for countries to receive the necessary technical assistance for applying internationally recommended statistical systems and for identifying and remedying the major statistical deficiencies existing at the present time.

45. It recommended that Governments should give urgent attention to the problem of achieving speedier publication of statistical information.

46. It further recommended that Governments should undertake the preparation and publication of provisional estimates of key national accounts aggregates at the end of each year.

The least developed among the developing countries

47. In resolution 232(X), the Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary to work out a detailed programme of action for the 1970s for the African member States and to report to the Ministerial Meeting of the African Group of the Group of 77, preparatory to the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and to the Special International Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to be held in Vienna in June 1971, as well as to the appropriate governing bodies of the specialized and executive agencies.

48. It called upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to expedite, in consultation with the heads of the specialized and executive agencies, the regional economic commissions and other appropriate bodies, a comprehensive study of the problems of the least developed among the developing countries, and to recommend special measures within the second United Nations Development Decade for dealing with such problems, as requested by General Assembly resolution 2564(XXIV) of 13 December 1969.

49. It urged the Executive Secretary to transmit the action programme to the Economic and Social Council for appropriate action by the governing bodies of the specialized and executive agencies.

Participation of Angola, Guinea(Bissau), Mozambique and Namibia in the work of the Commission

50. In resolution 233(X), the Conference of Ministers requested all States and international bodies still extending financial and military aid to Portugal and South Africa to discontinue such aid immediately.

51. It requested the Executive Secretary to do everything in his power to assist the liberation movements of African countries under colonial domination in their preparation for accession to national sovereignty in the best possible conditions, by providing them with the means for training competent senior officials.

52. It further requested the Executive Secretary to associate the representatives of such African territories with all ECA multinational economic projects.

Venue of the second meeting of the Conference of Ministers

53. In resolution 234(X), the Conference recommended that its second meeting be held at Accra, Ghana, in 1973.

54. It requested the Executive Secretary to fix the date of the meeting, after due consultation with the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the Chairman of the first meeting of the Conference of Ministers.

Subsidiary bodies

55. On the basis of the Executive Committee's recommendations, the Conference decided to abolish the working parties established under resolution 128(VII) of 22 February 1965, but to retain the Conference of African Planners, the Conference of African Statisticians and the Conference of African Demographers.

56. The Conference further decided that the Technical Committee of Experts should be organized into sub-committees attended by representatives of member States in the various fields, to enable the Committee to deal effectively with matters requiring its consideration. It further decided that all reports of the Technical Committee of Experts to the Conference of Ministers, should be submitted through the Executive Committee, which would meet in due course to submit its views on such reports.

57. The Conference further decided that the membership of the Executive Committee should be increased from twelve to sixteen, and determined the composition of the Committee for the two-year period 1971-1973. It confirmed the right of the Executive Committee to elect its own officers, the only restriction in resolution 188(IX) of 10 February 1969 being that

the Chairman of the Conference of Ministers should also be Chairman of the Executive Committee. It further recommended that whenever possible member States should be represented by Ministers at meetings of the Executive Committee.

Rules of procedure

58. Under Economic and Social Council resolution 1393(XLVI) of 3 June 1969, the Conference of Ministers decided to amend the Commission's rules of procedure in accordance with the Council's resolution 1296(XLIV) of 23 May 1968 on consultations with non-governmental organizations.

59. Acting upon the request of the Economic and Social Council at its 1596th meeting, the Conference decided to amend the first sentence of rule 38 of the Commission's rules of procedure, to read as follows: "Summary records of the meetings of the Commission, where required, shall be kept by the secretariat."

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