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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Meeting of Plenipotentiaries on the African
Regional Centre for Engineering Design and
Manufacturing

Inaugural meeting of the Council

Inaugural meeting of the Executive Board

Cotonou, Benin, 4 to 7 April 1979

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT
ON THE
AFRICAN REGIONAL CENTRE FOR ENGINEERING DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING

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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the specific procedures and protocols that must be followed when conducting financial transactions. It details the steps for approval, execution, and documentation of these transactions.

3. The third part of the document addresses the role of the internal audit function in monitoring and evaluating the organization's financial controls. It describes how the internal audit team should conduct its work and report its findings to the board of directors.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the importance of regular communication and reporting between the various departments and the management team. It highlights the need for timely and accurate information to support decision-making and strategic planning.

I. Follow-up actions on the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Committee

1. The Intergovernmental Experts Meeting held from 31 October to 2 November 1978 on the establishment of the Regional Centre for Engineering Design and Manufacturing, *inter alia*, recommended that the following actions be undertaken as part of the follow-up activities:

- (i) ECA should take all necessary measures as a matter of urgency to identify for eventual recruitment highly qualified African personnel to man the Centre, especially the key posts;
- (ii) The recruitment of the staff should be embarked upon soon after the establishment of the Centre, bearing in mind the necessity of commencing training as soon as possible;
- (iii) Special attention should be given to the creation of national and subregional centres, and to fostering co-operation and co-ordination in their activities;
- (iv) Efforts should be made to ensure effective co-operation, harmonization and complementarity between the Centre of Technology and the Centre for Engineering Design and Manufacturing. The ECA should request the team leaders of the two projects to prepare an aide-mémoire on areas and modes of co-operation between the two Centres. This aide-mémoire should be presented to the Follow-up Committee as an annex to this report;
- (v) Provision should be made for a temporary building from which the Director-General of the Centre could operate to speed up the implementation of the project generally and particularly to facilitate the development of a permanent site and the establishment of effective liaison with member States;
- (vi) The ECA should present to the Follow-up Committee a progress report on the preparatory work for the establishment of the Centre, making appropriate recommendations for further action and taking due note of the views expressed during the Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts and the answers given to the various questions;
- (vii) The provision of land for the Centre should take cognizance of the probable need to develop a housing scheme for the staff and trainees of the Centre in the long run. For the time being, the host government should assist the Centre in securing suitable accommodation for its staff until such time as the Centre may be able to make independent arrangements.

2. Immediate follow-up actions are relevant only in relation to items (i), (iii), (iv) and (vi). As regards item (i), ECA has started to compile a

roster of potential candidates and more information is being sought from governments and other African institutions. Item (iii) above has been taken into account in the formulation of the work programme of the Centre. As regards item (iv), the need to ensure effective co-operation and harmonization and complementarity between the Centre of Technology and the Centre for Industrial Design and Manufacturing preliminary work has been undertaken in this connexion by the team leaders of the two projects but further action would be required to be undertaken by the Directors of the two Centres when they are recruited. In regard to item (vi) of the recommendations, a progress report on the preparation for the establishment of the Centre was made to the Follow-up Committee on Industrialization in Africa which met on 8 to 10 November 1978.

II. Follow-up actions on the recommendations of the Follow-up Committee

3. For the purposes of follow-up actions, the Follow-up Committee on Industrialization in Africa held from 8 to 10 November 1978 after its consideration on the agenda item on Engineering Design Centre made the following recommendations:

- (i) the Committee requested the Executive Secretary to circulate the mission report and approved Constitution to all member States;
- (ii) that the Executive Secretary should proceed to convene a meeting of Plenipotentiaries early in 1979 to sign the agreement which will set up the Centre;
- (iii) that the Executive Secretary should discuss the exact dates of Plenipotentiaries meetings with the Government of the People's Republic of Benin and communicate the agreed dates to member States in good time;
- (iv) that the deadline for submitting application for hosting the Centre is extended to 30 December 1978 under the conditions laid down in the Follow-up Committee report, E/CN.14/INR/223;
- (v) that immediately after the signature of members desiring to join the Centre, the first meeting of the Council will be held to decide on:
 - (a) location of the Centre,
 - (b) budget for 1979 to 1980,
 - (c) contribution of member States of the Centre,
 - (d) job description, salaries and terms of employment for the senior personnel of the Centre,
 - (e) decide and approve the work programme for 1979/1980.

4. The reports of the Intergovernmental Experts Meeting on Engineering Design and Manufacturing (already given to participants at that meeting) and of the fifth meeting of the Follow-up Committee on Industrialization in Africa (already distributed to participants of that meeting) and the approved Constitution of the Centre by the Follow-up Committee as well as all working documents of Plenipotentiaries, Council of the Centre and Executive Committee meetings were sent to all member Governments in February 1979.

5. After consultations with the Government of the People's Republic of Benin, the Government graciously agreed to host the meeting of Plenipotentiaries from 4 to 7 April 1979.

6. Following the decision of the Follow-up Committee to extend the deadline to 30 December 1978 for submitting application for hosting the Centre, ECA sent a cable on 14 November 1978 and a letter on 17 November 1978 enclosing questionnaires to all Governments informing them of the decision of the Follow-up Committee to extend the deadline under agreed conditions and of holding the Plenipotentiaries meeting in Cotonou, Benin and invited the Governments desirous to host the Centre to submit their applications. As of 24 January 1979, the following countries had replied to indicate their unwillingness to host the Centre: Central African Empire, Mauritania, Malawi, Seychelles, Ivory Coast, Angola and Botswana. Egypt asked the extension of the deadline to 31 January 1979 and was informed by cable on 11 January 1979 that the secretariat has no mandate to extend the deadline. Only Uganda met the deadline by sending its application on 28 December 1978 but the application had not been accompanied by a cheque of \$US 7,500 as laid down in the agreed conclusions of the meeting of the Follow-up Committee referred to above. However, on the advice of the UNDP in Kampala, general efforts to visit Uganda were abandoned.

7. On 7 February 1979 an ECA staff visited Burundi, one of the candidate countries to host the Centre, to fill some of the gaps on information concerning the industrial environment.

8. ECA secretariat prepared all working documents, see (iv) above on first page of the Plenipotentiaries, Council of the Centre and Executive Committee meetings and sent them to all Governments in February 1979 as indicated in (1) above on follow-up actions undertaken.

III. Recommendation on the responsibility of the host country

9. The approach to the hosting of the Design Centre may have different meanings to member countries as a whole and those countries who may wish to host the Centre. From the point of view of potential host countries there may be tendency to consider primarily the benefit accruing to the countries in terms of prestige and whatever foreign exchange earnings the Centre may generate and from other external economies. This is reasonable expectation on the part of the potential host country which cannot be ignored. On the other hand, from the point of view of all the other African countries, the principal objective is to ensure effective establishment of the Centre and guarantee the speedy growth of the Centre to ensure that it starts almost immediately to play an effective role in speeding up the process of industrialization in the African region and in particular in the creation and promotion of design capability in all member States. From this latter point of view, hosting the Centre is to be viewed not

as a gift to an individual country by member States, but primarily as a responsibility which the host country undertakes to bear on behalf of all African countries for ensuring that the project will be implemented effectively to serve the purposes for which it is planned.

10. However, responsibility implies a cost on the part of the host country. This cost may take different forms but perhaps the most important cost arises from the fundamental responsibility of the host country to keep the project in operation even if no substantial resources are forthcoming from member States or any other sources. The need for this arises from the usual difficulty of slow and possibly irregular flow of funds from member States and the need to keep the control of the Centre within the hands of the African Governments. In order to ensure this, it is essential that the host country should guarantee that it would be willing either as need arises, to meet about 30 per cent of the total cost of the project which amounts to about 4.5 million dollars for every two years when the cost is estimated at 15 million US dollars so as to keep the project going as a concrete contribution to collective self-reliance.

11. This requirement may seem stringent, but it is the only way to guarantee to ensure that the project will come to naught because of the slow flow and irregularity of resources mobilization among member States.

IV. Some indicators of industrial base and environment of the potential host countries

12. The location criteria approved by the Intergovernmental Experts on Industrial Design and Manufacturing as well as by the Follow-up Committee on Industrialization in Africa, underlined, inter alia, adequate transport and communications, and suitable industrial environment. Towards this end, the following information on the relative shares of manufacturing in gross domestic product may be useful. For effective comparison, the total value of manufacturing in US dollars for 1970, 1975 and 1977 were added together and the relative shares of this total computed as indicators of the level of relevant industrial activities.

Percentage share of manufacturing sector in GDP
(excluding electricity, water, transport and construction)

Country	(in per cent)		
	1970	1975	1977
Nigeria	65.4	80.0	85.5
Kenya	21.5	12.9	10.0
Burundi	2.1	1.6	1.4
Uganda	11.0	5.5	3.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ECA Industrial Statistics Section and national sources.