

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
and SOCIAL  
COUNCIL

PROVISIONAL  
For participants only  
E/CN.14/SR.163(X)  
24 February 1971  
Original: ENGLISH/  
FRENCH



ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Tenth session;  
Conference of Ministers  
Tunis, 8-13 February 1971

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THIRD MEETING  
held at the Bourse du Travail, Tunis  
on Friday, 12 February 1971, at 10 p.m.

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their activities relevant to economic and social development  
in Africa (continued)

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and Social Council

Adoption of draft resolutions

Closure of the session

Chairman: Mr. Tijani Chelli Tunisia

Executive Secretary: Mr. R.K.A. Gardiner

Secretary: Mr. L.K. Darboux

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Corrections to the summary record should be signed by the delegation concerned and submitted in triplicate to the Secretary of the Commission (UNECA, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa) not later than 30 April 1971.

RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND REPORT ON THEIR ACTIVITIES  
RELEVANT TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (continued)

The CHAIRMAN regretted that there had not been time to hear the statement by the observer for Canada but assured him that his statement would be circulated as an official document or annexed to the summary record of the meeting.

Mr. BOUNDIO (Central African Republic). The Commission had heard statements by representatives of international organizations expressing support to the African countries in collaboration with ECA. In addition to those multinational relationships, African States also had bilateral relationships with international organizations. It frequently happened when a government submitted a project to an international organization that the representative on the spot was optimistic about its feasibility but subsequently the headquarters of the organization concerned would indicate that the project was of little interest. Such actions caused considerable disappointment. It would be better if representatives of international organizations were completely frank with governments and stated at once whether they considered projects unsuitable.

Mr. DARBOUX (Secretariat) said that since the Commission's ninth session, the General Assembly had held two sessions, its twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth, and the Economic and Social Council four sessions, its forty-sixth to forty-ninth. The resolutions adopted at those sessions were brought to the Commission's notice in document E/CN.14/492. Among those of special interest to the Commission were ECOSOC resolution 1440(XLVII), taking note of the Commission's annual report, and resolution 1393(XLVI) concerning amendments to the rules of procedure. The Commission also had before it document E/CN.14/L.384, which outlined the proposed changes.

With regard to the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, he wished to draw particular attention to resolutions 2646(XXV) and 2647(XXV). As to resolution 2686(XXV), it recommended that the Economic and Social Council consider renaming the regional economic commissions so that ECA would become the Economic and Social Commission for Africa, and he invited the Conference to express its views on that subject.

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) inquired whether the resolution in question was mandatory and whether the change in name would mean the attribution of increased resources to the Commission.

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) said that the resolution was a recommendation adopted by the General Assembly; it was for the Commission to accept or reject it. There was no indication that it would lead to any increase in resources.

Mr. GUIDIGLO (Dahomey) expressed qualified support for the proposed change in name.

Mr. GABDOU (Chad) said that it had taken twelve years for ECA to become known throughout Africa and a change in its name at that stage might lead to confusion.

Mr. BOUNDIO (Central African Republic) was also against the change of name.

Mr. BELAI ABBAI (Ethiopia) was in favour of retaining the name ECA, which had by now become a household word. Any change would lead to expense and complications.

Mr. PAW U (Chief, Regional Commissions Section, United Nations Headquarters) said that resolution 2686(XXV) had been adopted in the Second Committee with some misgivings but there had been an overwhelming majority in its favour when it had been considered in plenary. Three parties were invited under the resolution to express an opinion concerning the change: the regional economic commissions, the Secretary-General and the Economic and Social Council. A precedent already existed in the case of UNICEF, which had changed its name while retaining its original initials, and ECA might wish to follow that example.

Mr. ONANA (Cameroon) and Mr. NIOUPIN (Ivory Coast) supported that suggestion.

Mr. KHAZALI (Sierra Leone) preferred to keep the name as it was.

Mr. MENSAB (Ghana) did not consider that the Conference of Ministers of ECA needed to be bound by a resolution adopted by their Ambassadors in New York.

Mr. TNANI (Tunisia) felt that the reasons advanced for opposing the change in name were not convincing. If the Commission was already in fact dealing with social matters, that was all the more reason for changing its name and since the other regional economic commissions would doubtless change their names its action should be in line with theirs.

Mr. TOURE MAMADOU (Mauritania) said that he had no objection to changing the Commission's name but hoped that its initials could be kept as they were.

Mr. ONANA (Cameroon) considered that the Commission was morally bound by the General Assembly decision even though it might involve some additional expense.

Mr. RACHID DRISS (Tunisia), Chairman of the Economic and Social Council, said that the question had not yet been considered by ECOSOC but would probably be discussed at its forthcoming session in July, when the opinions expressed by the various regional commissions would be taken into account. The idea of a change of name was not fortuitous; delegations had long asserted that social affairs were just as important as, and sometimes even more important than, economic affairs. The fact that in the General Assembly 99 votes had been cast in favour of the recommended change must be taken into consideration, and the Commission's approval of the suggestion would indicate that it realized the close interconnexion between economic and social matters.

Mr. MOGAE (Botswana) said that ECA had always concerned itself with both economic and social affairs. What it required was an augmentation of its resources and not a mere change of name.

Mr. SHAGARI (Nigeria) saw no cogent reason for changing ECA's name.

The CHAIRMAN summed up the view of the Commission as being divided on the subject. Little enthusiasm had been expressed for the proposed change in name.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) read out the following names of countries proposed for election as new members of the Executive Committee: for the East African sub-region - Ethiopia, Madagascar, Somalia and Uganda; for the Central African sub-region - Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad and Democratic Republic of Congo; for the West African sub-region - Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Niger; and for the North African sub-region - Tunisia, United Arab Republic, Algeria and Morocco.

Mr. AHMED (Sudan) stated for the record that although he had no objection to the proposed membership of the Executive Committee, his delegation had not been consulted about the members proposed for the North African sub-region and he registered his objection to that procedure on principle.

Mr. DEWIDAR (United Arab Republic) explained that delegations had been informed that Sudan had retired from the Executive Committee, and had therefore proposed a replacement for it.

The CHAIRMAN stated that, if there was no objection, he would consider the members nominated as duly elected to the Executive Committee.

It was so decided.

Mr. GABDOU (Chad) suggested that the transmission of documents and communications between member countries and the ECA secretariat should take place not only through the Ministries of Foreign Affairs but also directly through the ministries concerned so as to expedite correspondence.

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) explained that the secretariat had received strict instructions from governments, and in many cases governments had preferred, to have all correspondence channelled through their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The secretariat was anxious for its correspondence to reach those directly concerned as rapidly as possible but it could not alter the procedure followed unless it received a specific mandate from governments to do so.

Mr. BOUNDIO (Central African Republic) suggested that the Executive Secretary should follow the example of UNESCO and send copies of all correspondence to the ministry concerned, while continuing to send the original documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. KHAZALI (Sierra Leone) and Mr. ONANA (Cameroon) supported that suggestion.

Mr. NIOUPIN (Ivory Coast) said that the Executive Secretary could not be expected to disregard the instructions formally given to him by governments. His Government had expressly stated that all documents must be sent directly to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that no copies should be sent to other ministries. He urged his colleagues not to press the Executive Secretary on the matter.

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) proposed that all ECA secretariat documents should continue to be sent to the receiving authority as now notified to the secretariat by the Government concerned, and that unless expressly forbidden by the Government concerned a copy of the document should be sent simultaneously to the relevant ministry, if possible through the United Nations Resident Representative. The Executive Secretary should write to all governments, except those like the Ivory Coast which had expressly objected, informing them of the proposed procedure and giving them some two months in which to register possible objections.

It was so agreed.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECA(X) PL/1-5)

Mr. BELAI ABBAI (Ethiopia), Rapporteur, introducing the report (ECA(X) PL/1-5), thanked the secretariat for its co-operation in preparing the report and read out a series of amendments to the following documents: bring this text more into line with the debate: ECA(X) PL/1, paragraphs 3, 7, 30 and 36; ECA(X) PL/2, paragraphs 2, 3, 4a, 4c, 5, 36 and 37; ECA(X) PL/3, paragraphs 48, 49, 50, 52 plus a new paragraph; and ECA(X) PL/4, paragraphs 4, 7, 10 and 35.

After a short discussion, Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) proposed that the Conference should consider its report to the Economic and Social Council section by section, confining its comments to major points of substance.

It was so agreed.

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) said that, as in the past, the secretariat would go carefully through the report, correcting points of style, translation and grammar, and making all necessary amendments and additions.

ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK; ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS (ECA(X) PL/1)

Mr. TNANI (Tunisia) proposed that, the Conference being primarily a meeting of Africans, the observers from Guinea (Bissau) and Mozambique should precede the observer from the Federal Republic of Germany in paragraph 7. He also proposed the addition of the following sentence to the end of paragraph 15: "The Prime Minister of the Tunisian Government drew attention to the experiment carried out in that direction by the Maghreb countries".

It was so agreed.

Mr. ANTCHOUÉY (Gabon) thought that the words "investment in the amenities of life" in paragraph 28 should be made more explicit.

Mr. GABDOU (Chad) proposed that, in paragraph 17, the Hon. Q.K.J. Masire's official title of Vice-President of Botswana should be added after his name.

It was so agreed.

Mr. MBEKA (Democratic Republic of Congo) suggested that the second sentence of paragraph 29 should be redrafted to make the meaning clearer.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS; AGENDA; MEMBERSHIP AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION; REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (ECA(X) PL/2)

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) proposed that paragraph 15 should be deleted and the first sentence of paragraph 16 suitably amended.

It was so agreed.

Mr. ABERKANE (Algeria) proposed that the words "certain of" be added before "its recommendations" in the last sentence of paragraph 16.

It was so agreed.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE; REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS (ECA(X) PL/3)

In reply to a question by Mr. MENSAH (Ghana), Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) said that the beginning of paragraph 44(b) could be amended to read: "The expansion of the Commission's work programme and the increasing responsibilities assumed by it..."

Mr. ONANA (Cameroon) proposed the replacement of the word "should" in paragraph 51 by "could".

It was so agreed.

Mr. ABERKANE (Algeria) proposed the addition of the words "together with the replies by governments to the questionnaire" to sub-paragraph 49(f).

After a short discussion, Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) suggested that sub-paragraph 49(f) should be amended to read: "The Executive Secretary would prepare a synthesis of the replies with the assistance of the Executive Committee and transmit this synthesis, with the replies of member States, to the Secretary-General."

It was so agreed.

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS; SURVEY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN AFRICA; AFRICA'S STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1970S (ECA(X) PL/4)

Mr. SHAGARI (Nigeria) Proposed the insertion of the words "and accepted" after "suggested" in the first sentence of paragraph 9, and the addition, to the end of that paragraph, of a new sentence reading: "This was accordingly done".

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) said that the Nigerian representative's proposal was quite acceptable so long as the word "accordingly" was not taken to mean that the statement would be circulated before the end of the Conference.

The Nigerian representative's proposal was adopted.



Mr. MANSAH (Ghana), referring to paragraph 35, drew attention to the Rapporteur's suggestion that the draft declaration on co-operation between ECA and UNIDO might be annexed to the report. He proposed that the first, second, third and eighth paragraphs of the draft declaration should be incorporated in the body of the report. The other paragraphs should be deleted as they dealt with matters such as UNIDO's programme of work, on which the Conference was not competent to take any decision.

Mr. TNANI (Tunisia) supported the proposal by the representative of Ghana. He proposed that the fourth paragraph of the draft declaration, which dealt with liaison between the activities of ECA and UNIDO, should, at least in part, be incorporated in the body of the report, together with the first, second, third and eighth paragraphs.

The proposal of the representative of Ghana, as amended by Tunisian representative, was adopted.

Mr. TNANI (Tunisia) suggested the addition of the words "by the African countries members of the Industrial Development Board" after "introduced" in the second sentence of paragraph 35.

Mr. ANCHOUEY (Gabon) pointed out that Gabon, which was one of the co-authors of the draft declaration, was not a member of the Industrial Development Board. The Tunisian representative's suggestion, if adopted would have to be reworded accordingly.

Mr. SHAGARI (Nigeria) proposed that the last sentence of paragraph 28 should be amended to read: "The aid policies pursued during the 1960s had worsened the problem of debt servicing in the member States".

It was so agreed.

Mr. ABERKANE (Algeria) said that the text of paragraph 3 did not give a balanced picture of the discussions which had taken place, as it laid too much stress on agriculture and completely ignored industry.

After a discussion, in which Mr. MENSAH (Ghana), Mr. ABERKANE (Algeria) and Mr. NIOUPIN (Ivory Coast) took part, Mr. ABERKANE (Algeria) proposed that the second sentence of paragraph 3 should be amended to read: "Donor countries were urged to increase their aid to agricultural development." He also proposed the addition of the following sentence after the second sentence in that paragraph: "It was recognized, however, that a right balance should be maintained between agriculture and industrial development."

It was so agreed.

Mr. ONANA (Cameroon) said that, in his opinion, the wording of paragraph 26 should be toned down.

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) said that paragraph 26 accurately reflected the views expressed by his delegation during the discussion. However, in order to avoid specific reference to his delegation in the report, he was prepared to agree to the rewording of that paragraph.

Mr. BELAI ABBAI (Ethiopia), Rapporteur, suggested that paragraph 26 might be amended in such a way as to tone down its wording and yet not lose sight of the reality of the situation.

It was so agreed.

RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND REPORT ON THEIR ACTIVITIES  
RELEVANT TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (ECA(X)PL/5)

In reply to a question from Mr. MENSAH (Ghana), Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) stressed that the section of the report under consideration was in no way binding on the Governments of member States, but was merely a reflection of statements from observers.

He suggested that the Conference entrust the secretariat with the task of preparing the final version.

It was so decided.

Mr. ABERKANE (Algeria) said that, in the future, he would like to see statements from observers thrown open to discussion. Observers would then be able to report the reactions of the Conference to their respective agencies.

Mr. MAMADOU TOURE (Mauritania) pointed out that such a procedure would entail prolonging the Conference and that Ministers could not absent themselves from their respective countries for periods of more than a week.

Mr. ABERKANE (Algeria) observed that this was the procedure followed in other international bodies, particularly after statements from the representatives of UNDP and IBRD. The adoption of such a measure would be fully justified, especially since certain agencies such as UNCTAD and UNIDO were represented at the current session at the highest level.

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) requested that, in the future, the report on the steps taken by the Economic and Social Council pursuant to the resolutions adopted by ECA at the previous session be presented to the Conference early and not at the last meeting, as had been done here.

Document ECA(X)PL/5 was approved.

The draft report of the Conference of Ministers to the Economic and Social Council was adopted as amended.

## ADOPTION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

Vote of thanks to the host country

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation.

Congratulations to the officers

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation.

Congratulations to the secretariat

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation.

Date and location of the eleventh session

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation.

Human environment

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation.

The least developed of the developing countries

After an exchange between Mr. TNANI (Tunisia), Mr. MENSAH (Ghana), Mr. KHAZALI (Sierra Leone), Mr. PAULOS (Ethiopia), Mr. BOUNDIO (Central African Republic) and Mr. NICUPIN (Ivory Coast), Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) suggested that the fourth paragraph of the preamble be replaced by the following:

"Realizing also that the efforts of the Trade and Development Board concerning special measures in favour of..... deserved to be extended to other fields in the interest of these countries."

The new text of the fourth preambular paragraph was approved.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Energy

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) emphasized that, if the draft resolution under consideration was adopted by the Conference, it might possibly be necessary to request additional funds from United Nations Headquarters for its implementation.

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation.

Role of the Economic Commission for Africa in United Nations technical co-operation programmes in Africa

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation.

Population

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

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

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) pointed out that adoption of the draft resolution in its existing form would pose certain problems for the secretariat. Consequently, he proposed the following two amendments:

- (a) in the English text of the third operative paragraph, the words "to assist the liberation movements... to prepare for their accession to international sovereignty" to be replaced by "to assist the liberation movements... in their preparation for accession to international sovereignty".
- (b) operative paragraph 4 to be replaced by the following new text:  
"Further requests the secretariat to associate the representatives of these territories in all ECA's multinational economic projects".

The amendments were approved.

Mr. AHMED (Sudan) requested that in operative paragraph 5 the words "by the peoples" be replaced by the words "by the peoples under colonial domination".

It was so decided.

Mr. SHEHU SHAGARI (Nigeria) proposed replacing the beginning of the fourth preambular paragraph with the words: "Noting with regret..."

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Regional structures within the United Nations system

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) suggested that in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution the words "various measures" be replaced by "steps". He further suggested that at the beginning of paragraph 3, the word "Authorizes" be replaced by "Requests" and that at the beginning of paragraph 4 the words "Further authorizes" be replaced by "Urges".

It was so decided.

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) proposed that at the end of paragraph 4 the word "reply" be replaced by "report together with the replies of Governments".

It was so decided.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Institutional machinery of the Commission

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) suggested that the text, which was in the nature of a recommendation and a resolution should become a paragraph of the report.

It was so decided.

Mr. TOURE (Mauritania) suggested that, in paragraph 3 of the text presented, the expression "prior to the Conference" be replaced by "at the Conference".

It was so decided.

Mr. TNANI (Tunisia) suggested that, in the French text, at the end of paragraph 5, the word "bureau" be replaced by "Comité".

It was so decided.

The text to be included in the report, as amended, was approved by acclamation.

Africa's strategy for development in the 1970s

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) asked that the text presented be completed by a paragraph regarding the machinery for implementing the Strategy.

Following a discussion between Mr. MENSAH (Ghana), Mr. ONANA (Cameroon), Mr. MBEKA (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. PAULOS (Ethiopia), Mr. NICUPIN (Ivory Coast), Mr. MOPOLO-DADET (People's Republic of the Congo), Mr. TOURE (Mauritania), Mr. SYLLA (Senegal), Mr. ANCHOUEY (Gabon), Mr. TNANI (Tunisia) and Mr. GABDOU (Chad), the CHAIRMAN presented the text of a new operative paragraph which was to be added to the resolution. The text, which had been proposed by the delegations of Chad and Mauritania, read thus:

"8. Invite the Executive Secretary to take resolution 187(IX) as a base for the implementation of Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s".

The proposal was adopted.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

Draft resolution for action by the Economic and Social Council

Mr. GARDINER (Executive Secretary) suggested that paragraph 3 of the draft resolution be deleted.

It was so decided.

The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by acclamation.

CLOSURE OF SESSION

After the customary exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRMAN declared the tenth session of the Economic Commission for Africa, which was the first Conference of Ministers, closed.

The meeting rose on Saturday, 13 February 1971, at 4.20 a.m.