Seventh Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Southern Africa (ICE)

3-4 April, 2001
Lusaka, Zambia

Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) of the Subregional Development Centre for Southern Africa
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Seventh Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) of the ECA Subregional Development Centre for Southern Africa (SRDC-SA) was held from 3 to 4 April, 2001 in Lusaka, Zambia.

2. The Meeting was attended by representatives from the following countries: Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The following organizations also participated: African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI), Minerals and Energy Policy Centre (MEPC), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country offices of Angola, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Three members States were not represented, namely, Botswana, Malawi and Mauritius.

II. OPENING OF THE MEETING (Agenda item 1)

3. Opening statements were delivered by the outgoing Chairman from Namibia, the Director of the SRDC-SA and the Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development of the Government of the Republic of Zambia, Hon. Godfrey Simasiku.

4. The outgoing Chairperson, Ms. E. Shafudah, Acting Director of Development Planning at the National Planning Commission of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked the Government of the Republic of Zambia and the people of Zambia for their hospitality and for hosting the Seventh ICE Meeting. She extended the appreciation of the Government of the Republic of Namibia to the ECA and the SRDC-SA for the tireless work and dedication in supporting the development agenda of countries in Southern Africa.

5. Ms. Shafudah observed that the SRDC-SA had made the necessary follow-up on the National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) development as reflected in national workshops organized in Mozambique, Swaziland and Zambia, and noted the Centre's continued support to the activities of COMESA and SADC in areas such as transport and communications, gender, policy harmonization and integration. She also made reference to the outcome of the African Development Forum (ADF 2000), “The African Consensus and Plan of Action: Leadership to Overcome HIV/AIDS” and appealed for finding ways and means to enhance individual and collective efforts in reducing poverty and the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS which had become of great concern, especially in Southern African countries.

6. She appreciated the role played by the public sector, private sector and civil society in socio-economic development. In this regard, she was pleased that the Seventh ICE meeting was being organized in conjunction with a “Roundtable on Public Sector/Private Sector/Civil Society Partnership” as a Special Event.

7. Finally, Ms. Shafudah expressed concern about the recurrent flood disasters in Southern Africa, underlining the importance of strengthening existing early warning
systems at the subregional and national levels, including more efficient ways of coping with the aftermath.

8. On behalf of Mr. K. Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Mr. Robert M. Okello, Director of the ECA/SRDC-SA, welcomed participants to the meeting. He thanked the Government and the people of the Republic of Zambia for accepting to host the Seventh ICE and the Special Event, noting that this was proof of the continued support by the Government of Zambia to the Centre, which it hosts.

9. The Director reminded the meeting of the Six Meeting of ICE in 2000, which was organized in conjunction with the Subregional Workshop on National Information and Communication Infrastructure (NICI) development in Southern Africa. This year, the ICE was organized in conjunction with a Special Event a Roundtable on Public Sector/Private Sector/Civil Society Partnership. Combining these two events seemed a natural development, given the necessary interaction between them and the key role they play in economic and social development.

10. Highlighting the socio-economic conditions in the Southern Africa in 2000, the Director observed that all the countries, except Zimbabwe, had registered positive economic growth rates with aggregate GDP growth at 3.3 per cent in the subregion in 2000 compared to 3.4 per cent in 1999. This was projected to grow at between 3.5 and 5 per cent in 2001.

11. He further observed that the launch of the Free Trade Area of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA-FTA), the signing of the Trade Protocol of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the establishment of COMESA Court of Justice, were significant milestones in buttressing regional cooperation and integration for social development in the sub-region during the period under review. These positive developments, he cautioned, could be undermined by continued daunting challenges such as HIV/AIDS pandemic, which threatened to stall, and even reverse, some of the gains the countries were making.

12. The Director then highlighted the agenda of the meeting, including the Programme of Work for the period 2002-2003, as well as appeals to member States to support the implementation of some of its aspects. The areas of support included group training activities. He, therefore, appealed to member States to consider making pledges to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development (UNTFAD) during the Pledging Conference planned in May 2001 during the session of the ECA Conference of Ministers.

13. Mr. Okello appealed to participants to: actively discuss the various documents and enrich them; make suggestions and recommendations for improving the work of the Centre; and also make suggestions of policy nature that could be communicated to the ECA Conference of Ministers through the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW) the following month.

14. The Hon. Godfrey Simasiku, M.P. and Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development in the Government of the Republic of Zambia, delivered the key opening statement. After welcoming all participants to Zambia, the Minister thanked the ECA for organizing these meetings, which provided opportunities to share ideas on key issues
affecting socio-economic development and planning. He noted that such meetings contributed also to the formulation of common positions on key development issues. In this regard, he appealed to member States to support the activities of the ECA.

15. The Minister noted with appreciation ECA’s support to the subregional organizations, especially SADC and COMESA, and called for further collaboration, coordination and support among the regional economic communities. Hon. Simasiku commended the ECA for follow-up on the National Information and Communications Infrastructure (NICI) development activities following the subregional workshop in Windhoek, Namibia in April 2000 and acknowledged ECA’s assistance to Zambia in organizing the first national workshop for developing its national information and communications technology policy.

16. The Minister noted that all the agenda items were important to the development of Southern Africa and underlined the important role of the informal sector development, given the recent massive retrenchment from the public sector due to the reform programmes. He noted that Zambia was one of the four countries in Africa implementing an informal sector pilot project executed by the ECA with financial support from the GTZ of Germany.

17. Hon. Simasiku further welcomed the timely convening of the Special Event on Public Sector, Private Sector and Civil Society to enhance effective development in the subregion. The Minister also added his voice to the concern about the adverse effects of floods in a second consecutive year affecting people in the subregion, particularly in Malawi and Mozambique, and made an appeal for strengthening mechanisms for further preparedness and management of the aftermath of such disasters.

18. The Minister then declared the Seventh ICE Meeting officially open and wished participants fruitful deliberations.

III. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

A: Election of Officers (Agenda item 2)

19. The meeting elected the following countries to the Bureau:

- Zambia - Chairman
- Angola - Vice Chairman
- Mozambique - Rapporteur

B: Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work (Agenda item 3)

20. The Meeting adopted the following Agenda:

(i) Official Opening
(ii) Election of Officers
(iii) Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work
(iv) Report on the Work of the SRDC-SA
(vi) Follow up on Implementation of National Information and
Communication Infrastructure (NICI) polices in Southern Africa

(vii) Other Reports by the SRDC-SA:

(a) Report on Integration of Gender in Development Programmes in Southern African countries;
(b) Report on National Mechanisms for Harmonization of Policies and Coordination of Regional Cooperation and Integration in Southern Africa;
(c) Report on Food Security and Sustainable Development (Environment, Population, Agriculture) in Southern African Region;

(viii) Report on ECA Programmes (To be presented by other ECA sub-Programmes)
(ix) Reports by Cooperating Partners: OAU, ESAMI, COMESA, SADC, IOC and PAID-ESA
(x) Regional Priorities and Programme of Work of ECA/SRDC-SA
(xi) Any Other Business
(xii) Date and Venue of Next Meeting
(xiii) Adoption of the Report
(xiv) Closure of Meeting

21. The meeting adopted the organization of work as follows: 08.30 - 13.00 hours in the morning and 14.30 - 18.30 hours in the afternoon.

C. Report on the work of the SRDC-SA (Agenda item 4)


23. As a follow-up of the recommendations of the Sixth ICE meeting, the following status of implementation was presented:

■ The final report on Economic and Social Conditions in Southern Africa, 1998-1999 be finalized without the section on crime, which was seen as being not objective; and a workshop of relevant national experts be convened to examine it. Accordingly, the Secretariat revised and published the Report on Economic and Social Conditions in Southern Africa: 1998-1999, excluding the section on crime. It also revised the section on crime but could not release the report for public information, since the Centre was unable to organize the workshop of experts due to lack of funds.

■ The 2002-2003 work programme of SRDC-SA included the development of ICT in the countries of the sub-region. Furthermore, ECA was already providing support to some countries in their National Information and Communications Infrastructure (NICI)
development (Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia).

Furthermore, the ICE had proposed that the theme for the Seventh Meeting of ICE be "Enhancing and Strengthening Information Infrastructure and process for Accelerated Development". Upon consultation with the Development Information Systems Division of ECA, the Secretariat proposed that ICT form the basis for a special event to be organized together with the next meeting of ICE (2003).

ECA was requested to commission a study on modalities to assist member States to effectively strengthen their information systems. Upon detailed consideration of the recommendation, ECA deemed that this need was already covered within the existing framework of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI).

24. On activities carried out during the reporting period, over fifty percent of the work months and operational funds were allocated to provide technical assistance to RECs and advisory services to member States, a measure consistent with the operational role assigned to the Centre in the implementation of ECA programmes.

25. The Centre participated in various coordinating and consultative meetings and joint programming with COMESA and SADC in the development of transport. The Centre also participated in various meetings of the policy organs of COMESA and provided technical assistance to COMESA in other areas, in particular, its ongoing restructuring exercise.

26. The Centre, in collaboration with a Regional Adviser from the Economic and Social Policy Division (ESPD) at ECA Headquarters, prepared a draft report, which formed the basis for the SADC Annual Report, 2000. Furthermore, at the request of the Committee of SADC Ministers responsible for Mining and Minerals Development, the Centre also assisted the SADC Mining Coordination Unit in the preparation of a study on Small Scale Mining Development in Southern Africa. The SADC Mining and Marketing subcommittee meeting accepted the recommendations of the report and recommended that the Study be extended to cover the remaining SADC member States in order to get a full picture of the situation.

27. The experts in the Centre also participated in workshops and meetings of various SADC sector organs including the SADC Workshop on the Formation of a Regional Association for National Road Agencies, SADC Regional Seminar on Labour Migration in Southern Africa, and the SADC Employment and Labour Sector Annual Meeting of Ministers and Social Partners.

28. Advisory services and technical assistance were provided to: Mozambique, Swaziland and Zambia on different stages of ICT policy development; and Zambia on launching of the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PSRP), population and sustainable development, developmental challenges for Zambia's and Japan's Cooperation programme in the new millennium, as well as National Gender Policy formulation.

29. With regard to facilitation and networking, an Ad-hoc Experts Group Meeting on Gender Networking to control HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa was organized by the Centre.
The major outcome of the meeting is an action plan for engendering the SADC HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework.


31. Regarding facilitating integration activities of the UN system, the Centre participated in the regular activities of the UN Country Team in Zambia which constituted Heads of Agency meetings, preparation of the CCA for Zambia, meetings of the Expanded Theme Group on HIV/AIDS, launch of the 2000 UNDP Global Human Development Report, Launch of UNICEF 2001 State of the World's Children Report, and the meeting of the UN Agencies with Swedish MPs on the work of the UN on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.

32. Furthermore, some of the Divisions from ECA Headquarters participated in regional advisory missions to Southern Africa such as gender issues; the upgrading of the ASYCUDA in the COMESA region; simplification, harmonization and standardization of Customs documents and transit procedures for SADC; macro-economic management; preparation of the SADC Annual Report 1999/2000; water resources development and management; environment and natural resources accounting and use of the PEDA Model for Eastern and Southern African countries.

33. The following workshops and seminars are planned for 2001: (a) Special Event: Roundtable on Public Sector/Private Sector/Civil Society Partnership, which would take place from 5 to 6 April, 2001 after the ICE meeting; (b) Ad hoc Expert Group Meeting on Harmonization of National Mechanisms for Regional Integration in Southern Africa; (c) Workshop on Engendering the SADC HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework and Programme; (d) Subregional Training Workshop on the Management of interactions between Population, Agriculture and Environment (PEDA Model); and (e) Workshop on Natural Resources Accounting. The planned workshops (c), (d) and (e) would be implemented subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources.

34. The Centre also backstopped the UNECA/GTZ Pilot Project in Zambia on Promoting Informal Sector for Development in Africa to its final conclusion.

35. As part of strengthening ECA's outreach, the Centre disseminated information on ECA gender to relevant development partners. An expert of the Centre lectured on Africa's Diplomacy in the Age of Economic Renaissance to the Zambia Institute for Diplomacy and International Studies (ZIDIS).
36. On administrative issues, the number of professional staff deployed at the Centre was until recently six out of an establishment of ten. The sub-programme was thus implemented by five full time professional staff members and the Director. Furthermore, the skills mix still did not adequately cover all the priority areas of the subregion, lacking experts in the critical areas of trade, minerals, energy and natural resources management.

37. The contractual status of support staff on General Temporary Assistance Fund (GTAF) has been upgraded in all cases to short term appointments while management continues to explore ways of allocating more regular posts for support staff.

38. The need to increase the financial resource base was very pivotal to the effective implementation of the programme. In this regard, the ICE was requested to solicit support to the forthcoming UNTFAD Pledging Conference during the meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers in Algeria, 2 to 10 May 2001.

39. The meeting expressed concern on the postponement of two workshops due to lack of financial resources, namely on nexus issues, and natural resources accounting. In this regard it stressed the need for member States to support ECA activities for mobilization of the requisite financial resources. The meeting then took note of the report.

(Agenda item 5)

40. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered document ECA/SRDC/SA/ICE/2001/05, entitled “Report on Economic and Social Conditions in Southern Africa, 2000”. The report showed continued economic growth in 2000 with negative growth rate recorded only in Zimbabwe, which is estimated at 4 per cent. This decline significantly affected aggregate GDP of the subregion, which grew by 3.3 per cent in 2000 was mainly due to progressive implementation of macroeconomic policies in the subregion, strong business investment, particularly in transport and telecommunications, as well as favourable weather conditions. GDP rose at a sharply higher pace than in 1999 in some countries, including: Angola, Mauritius, South Africa and Zambia. In other countries, GDP growth rate was either maintained or increased only marginally compared to 1999.

41. Inflation rates remained in the double digit in some countries, with average rate higher in 2000 than in 1999. In Zimbabwe, for example, inflation is estimated to have reached about 60 per cent in 2000 compared to 58.5 per cent in 1999, while in Mozambique average inflation rate in 2000 stood at 12 per cent, compared to 4.8 per cent in 1999. High inflation rates in these two countries is the consequence of civil unrest and the devastating floods of February 2000, respectively. On the other hand, annual inflation decreased significantly in two countries, Malawi and Mauritius. In the former, average inflation is estimated to have dropped from 44.8 per cent in 1999 to 28.4 per cent in 2000, while the corresponding figures for the latter are 6.9 and 4.6 per cent, respectively.

42. The report showed that HIV/AIDS remained a major cross-cutting concern for Southern African countries. Figures for 1999, the last year for which data is available, indicate that 12 million people were living with HIV/AIDS in 11 countries of Southern Africa, with the cumulative number of deaths from AIDS being estimated at 973,700 for the
same period.

43. Although no new armed conflict emerged in the sub-region, the impact of continuing war in Angola contributed to poor diversification of economic activities away from petrol and the subsequent paralysis effect on economic and social activities throughout the country. In addition, the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo continued to impose negative economic and social impact and increase poverty in neighbouring countries, particularly Angola, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

44. Continued improvements in the economic performance of the subregion, depends on the continued implementation of economic reform programmes and deepening market-based private sector driven policies.

45. The Committee noted with concern that issues of environment, manufacturing industry, exchange rates and monetary policies as well as the impact of HIV/AIDS in the economy were not covered in the report. It was also pointed out that, unlike in the past, the report did not include a special section on a major development issue. In this regard, the meeting recommended that the next report should contain such a special section, possibly on environmental issues or on the economic impact of HIV/AIDS.


46. Regarding the issue of the economic impact of HIV/AIDS, the Secretariat informed the meeting that a special study had already been undertaken at ECA Headquarters on the impact of HIV/AIDS in Education for Eastern and Southern Africa and that the study will be made available to member States.

47. Furthermore, inaccuracies and inconsistencies with respect to the data and information provided in the report were pointed out. The Secretariat explained that since this was a draft report, all corrections would be made in the final report. The meeting took note of the report.

E. Follow up on Implementation of National Information and communication Infrastructure (NICI) Policies in Southern Africa (Agenda item 6)

48. The Committee considered the report, “Progress in National Information Communication Infrastructure Plans, Strategies and Development in Southern Africa,” a follow-up on progress made in the development of national information and communication infrastructure (NICI) policies in Africa since the workshop in Windhoek in April 2000. It was noted that convergence of telecommunications, broadcasting and computer technologies had created opportunities and challenges to Southern Africa to take advantage of strategies and policies for harnessing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to transform their economies and active participation of the society in the global information society. ECA had been promoting the African agenda at the global level and intends to hold two international workshops to provide input to the G8 and the UN Secretary General’s initiative. ECA had also scheduled a Heads of State Summit Dialogue as a follow-up to the African Development Forum ’99 that was held in October 2000 on the theme “the challenge to Africa of globalisation and the information age”.
49. Since the 6th ICE meeting, progress was made in broad-based ICT policy formulation, in telecommunications regulation, liberalization and privatization, in adopting electronic commerce strategies, in expanding Internet services and in setting up free zones for technology innovations. Although there were variations, activities in the development of broad-based information society strategies were significant. Considerable achievements had been made in Mauritius, for example. Five other countries including Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa and Zambia have taken key steps that advanced their broad-based national information and communication policies. In addition, Botswana has recently begun a process towards ICT policy formulation. Despite earlier efforts, progress in Malawi had been insignificant. On the other hand, Angola, Lesotho and Zimbabwe had made little progress in development of their broad-based national information and communication strategies.

50. The meeting sought clarification on the role of ECA in mobilizing global resources, particularly ODA for ICT development in Africa. The Secretariat reported that ECA is working with UNDP, particularly with the country offices, to set the African Agenda and to develop strategies and programmes that could tap into global resources. In this regard, the Executive Secretary of ECA is discussing with bilateral donors, G8 countries and other development agencies to mobilize financial resources for ICT development in Africa.

F. Other Reports by the SRDC-SA: (Agenda item 7)

(a) Report on Integration of Gender in Development Programmes in Southern African Countries

51. The Committee considered the “Report on Integration of Gender in Development Programmes in Southern African Countries”. The report highlighted the objectives of the report which are to: implement in Southern Africa, the strategy for advancing gender equality and equity through gender mainstreaming; support the implementation of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development; and integrate gender into development programmes in Southern African countries.

52. The report showed the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa, especially among women and children, necessitating the SRDC/SA to organize in November 2000, an Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting on Gender Networking to Control HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. It noted that experts at the ad hoc meeting found the SADC HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework not gender-responsive. Addressing the pandemic through a gender responsive approach was deemed necessary in order to maximize the complementarity of the skills of both men and women. To that end, the experts drew up an action plan for engendering the Framework which constitutes a process of operationalizing it.

53. Immediate follow-up action includes two activities to be implemented in 2001. One would involve engaging a Team of Experts to substantively engender the framework; the second would be the organization of a workshop for the SADC HIV/AIDS Sector Coordinators and other stakeholders with a view to sensitizing, internalizing and instilling ownership of the action plan. In order to accommodate this activity, the ICE was requested to take note that the SRDC-SA had to reformulate the activity in 2000-2001 Work Programme:
Training of Trainers for Women in Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Legal Literacy [Output 16.A.III (d) in order to organize the workshop.

54. The representative from ESAMI informed the meeting of a model for gender mainstreaming and engendering sectoral policies which was developed for all SADC sectors. He offered to provide the model for use by ECA. The meeting noted the report with a recommendation on the need to adopt a multi-sectoral approach in gender mainstreaming.

(b) Report on National Mechanism for Coordination of Regional Cooperation and Integration in Southern Africa

55. The Committee considered the document entitled “Report on National Mechanism for Coordination of Regional Cooperation and Integration, which noted that, although regional cooperation and integration have been the foundation for Africa’s economic and social development, efforts to bring about a fundamental socioeconomic structural change in Africa had often been frustrated by domestic and external factors. As a result, the countries of the subregion continued to experience limited structural changes, social transformation and economic growth. In addition, the fact that most countries belonged to more than one of the regional groupings, exerted further pressure on the already limited resources for deepening the integration process.

56. In this context, the Economic Commission for Africa Subregional Development Centre for Southern Africa (UNECA/SRDC-SA) planed to undertake a study to assess existing national mechanisms for coordination of regional cooperation and integration in Southern Africa. The study would be presented to an Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting in June 2001 and would be an integral part of the regional study, which was coordinated by the Regional Cooperation and Integration Division (RCID) of ECA.

57. The objective of the Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting will be to review existing national mechanisms for regional cooperation and integration in Southern Africa, and make appropriate recommendations to minimize cost and increase the benefits of regional cooperation and integration in Southern Africa. The discussions from the meeting would form the basis for a policy document suggesting appropriate mechanisms for coordination of regional economic cooperation and integration at national level.

58. In terms of coordination arrangements at national level, it appeared that the establishment of a Coordinating Ministry for each cooperation institution was the most common practice in Southern Africa. In the light of the above, the following questions should be addressed:

• Should all the countries aim at having a single mechanism for regional cooperation and integration? If yes, what was the best possible approach to ensuring effective coordination at country level?

• Pre- and Post-meetings preparedness, though different in most countries, seemed to be important and necessary for coordination of national positions. What was the best
approach to ensuring these consultations?

- Follow-up actions were not properly stated. What was the best approach for effective implementation of agreed positions?

- Preparation and presentation of the meeting reports was also not clearly stated. Who should prepare these reports? How should the report be prepared? Where should the report go? And for what purposes?

- In most of the preparatory processes the Civil Society and private Sector had no specific roles whereby they could also participate and discuss issues pertaining to integration and the way they affected their operations. What was the best approach to ensuring effective private sector participation in decision-making processes for regional cooperation and integration?

59. The Committee sought clarifications about the objectives of the study and expressed concern as to why the Secretariat was not presenting a concrete proposal on a mechanism to member States for consideration. The Committee further pointed out that involvement of the Private Sector and Civil Society organisations should be formalized at institutional level to facilitate their active participation in the integration process. The example of MERCOSUR was highlighted. In addition, the meeting was also informed that Civil Society, particularly women and labour groups, were actively participating in SADC Sectoral Meetings, for example Gender and ELS.

60. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the report was mainly to brainstorm on the issues raised and to obtain proposals from the member States in order to finalize the paper which will be presented to the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting. It further informed the Committee that ADF 2001 will be on the theme “Regional Integration in Africa” at which Southern African countries are called upon to provide a subregional position paper.

61. The Committee considered the report as very important, and encouraged ECA to proceed with the study and come up with some best practices from which member States could draw some lessons. The Committee took note of the report in light of the above observations.

(c) Report on Food Security and Sustainable Development (Environment, Population, Agriculture) in Southern Africa

62. The Meeting considered the document entitled “Report on Food Security and Sustainable Development (Environment, Population, Agriculture) in Southern Africa”, abridged version whose objective was to review the status of food security in Southern Africa in the context of sustainable development in relation to population, agriculture and environment. The review covered an analysis of food situation over recent years; interaction among population growth, food security, food production, environment and sustainable development; and initiatives to address food security.

63. The report stressed that in addressing issues of food security and sustainable
development in Southern Africa, attention needed to be given to: reducing poverty through rural development as an overall priority goal; increasing socio-economic growth and ensuring equitable distribution of growth; improving health and education of the population; empowering women to actively participate in socio-economic development; ensuring participation of all stakeholders in programmes; and maintaining peace and stability.

64. The report noted that in some developing countries, population growth contributed to more than 70 per cent to growth in food demand. As the majority of the population in Southern Africa depended on agriculture, population growth would continue to increase population density on agricultural land per household. In some of the counties, arable land was already very limited. Consequently, further pressure from population growth would increase the number of the landless population. The situation was worse where people who were already using marginal lands which required higher production costs - more use of fertilizers which the poor could not afford.

65. Other factors that negatively affected food security and sustainable development in Southern Africa included low status of women; poor health and the impact of HIV/AIDS; poverty; low application of science and technological innovations in agriculture and food production; poor infrastructure; weak extension services, marketing and distribution of inputs; and wars and disasters.

66. The report urged member States to address these constraints seriously and it proposed specific recommendations. Among these were: implementation of policies to enhance the role and status of women with regard to education, family planning and reproductive health, ownership of land and access to credit facilities; inclusion of women in the policy making process; ensuring that extension and technical services are extended to women producers; prevention of further spread of HIV/AIDS; reducing the levels of poverty by creation of secure gainful employment to the economically active population; ensuring equal access to productive resources; linking socio-economic development sectors so as to enhance the synergies of various policies towards sustainable development; applying affordable technologies and innovations, including irrigation, to assist farmers improve productivity, post-harvest losses, food storage and processing; improving the infrastructure in general to support food production and marketing; and creating a peaceful and stable environment, conducive to food security and sustainable development.

67. The meeting was thus called upon to urge member States to consider food security and sustainable development as one of the priority goals and take concrete action to ensure that in addressing food security and sustainable development, they take into account all other factors that have both direct and indirect impact on food security and sustainable development.

68. In the discussions, the Committee underscored the importance of food security as one of the priority goals of socio-economic development, noting especially that poor people were hungry people and the hungry were poor. Thus, food security was not only an issue of agriculture. Job opportunities for employment was part of the issues to be addressed to ensure access to food. Linking various national policies towards common economic and social development goals was underscored as important in the quest towards food security and sustainable development. In this context, the population, environment, development and
agriculture (PEDA) model was seen as a useful advocacy tool on the linkages and policy implications for food security.

69. The Committee appealed to member States in the subregion to work towards formulation of a common position on issues of sustainable development at the forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in South Africa in 2002. The Committee, in this regard, appealed to ECA to take the lead in assisting member States for preparation of common African position.

70. The Committee further stressed that although most countries in the subregion had policies on food security, these policies were not being implemented due to a number of factors including weak capacity for implementation, inadequate resource mobilization to implement these polices as well as weak national commitment. It was in this context that FAO was organizing a World Food Summit in Rome, from 5-9 November, 2001 as follow-up to the 1996 World Summit to stimulate political commitment as well as enhance resource mobilization for effective implementation of programmes and policies. At that meeting member States would be reporting on actions taken to implement the 1996 World Food Summit Plan of Action.

71. Subregional and regional trade was also underlined as crucial in addressing food security. The Committee noted that WTO had just completed taking stock of the issue for renegotiations on the Agreement on Agriculture (AOA). The Committee stressed the importance of African Countries to actively participate in the WTO negotiations on the AOA starting April 2001.

72. The Committee also took note of the forthcoming meeting of African Ministers of Agriculture to be held from 21" to 22" April, 2001 in Lome, Togo, at which representatives from ministries of Agriculture and Commerce and Trade will deliberate on Food Strategies in Africa. The meeting was informed that the paper on Food Strategies in Africa, prepared by FAO for discussion, could be obtained from the Ministries of Agriculture in each country or from FAO representative offices.

73. The Committee endorsed the report and the recommendations.

(d) Report on the Pilot Project in Zambia on the Informal Sector Development in Africa

74. The Committee considered the document entitled "Project for the Promotion of the Informal Sector for Development in Africa", initiated and implemented by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and funded by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Project aims at creating an environment for the informal sector operators to increase their contribution to the socio-economic development of their countries.

75. The long-term objective of the ECA in this project is to contribute to the process of socio-economic development in Africa through the expansion of the role of the informal sector. Its immediate objective is to sensitize decision-makers in several African countries to the need
to improve the informal sector's enabling environment. In achieving the objectives, the Project aims to assist: the micro and small enterprises (MSEs) to learn how to solve their own problems, and to play a more prominent role in the socio-economic development of the African countries.

76. The Project's target group are informal sector operators (ISOs), in particular the micro and small entrepreneurs (MSEs), usually considered to be the same as micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and it applies a participatory approach using group methodology. It is process oriented, dialogue-oriented and aims at raising the competence of the participants.

77. It was emphasized that most African countries faced high rate of unemployment. As a result, most of the people are trying to establish their own businesses. It is for this reason that the objectives and approach of the project could be utilised by other African countries in their efforts to promote the Informal Sector. Once the Informal Sector has been developed in the countries, they will go a long way to contribute towards the economies of many African countries.

78. The Committee expressed appreciation and great interest in the project. There was extended debate on the terminology "informal sector" as a category of economic activity. The Committee expressed the need to establish specific benchmarks demarcating the informal from formal sectors so as to eliminate unfair competition between them. Questions were also raised on the sustainability of the Project in Zambia after its current phase. It suggested that the activities could be incorporated into another project or alternatively that the current project staff form an NGO to carry forward the activities of the Project.

79. The Mozambican representative informed the meeting that his country was implementing a similar project, but contrary to the experiences in other countries, it was the government which is implementing the project and not an NGO. In Mozambique the project also assist families.

80. The Secretariat informed the Committee that selection criteria of beneficiaries was mainly done on the basis of being a private operator involved in productive activities, employing less than five people and with small capital. It further informed the committee that there would be a Subregional Workshop on Informal Sector in Lusaka by mid-2001. At this Workshop member States will be informed about other aspects for running the project.

81. The Secretariat sounded the meeting that any interested member State should contact the Centre for further information on how to get the project implemented in their respective countries. The Committee took note of the report in light of the above observations.

G. Report on ECA Programmes (Agenda item 8)

82. Two presentations were made under this agenda item: (i) "ECA Major Initiatives and Programme Developments," (ECA/SRDC/SA/ICE/2001/8a) which focused on forging partnerships for Africa's development, field projects on post-conflict reconstruction and development; and (ii) Activities of the ECA/ESPD. The discussions of the two documents were done at the same time.
83. Forging partnerships for Africa’s development was best explained in a book entitled *Partnership Africa: A Synopsis of the ECA Framework for Cooperation*. The book provided a snapshot of nineteen projects in six thematic clusters which cover: consensus building and partnership; promoting good governance and civil society participation; enhancing international competitiveness and regional integration; promoting South-south Cooperation and capital markets development; integrating gender concerns in development; addressing sustainability in population, environment, agriculture and development, as well as promoting information services for Africa’s development.

84. The Second African Development Forum dealt with the theme “AIDS: The Greatest Leadership Challenge”, and took place from 3 to 7 December, 2000 in Addis Ababa. The Forum ended with the adoption of the African Consensus and Plan of Action which calls for leadership at all levels—in the family, in the community, the workplace, schools, civil society, government and at the international level to overcome the continent-wide threat of HIV/AIDS.

85. The planned ADF 2001 theme was accelerating regional integration in Africa. In this regard, the ECA was preparing *The Annual Report on Integration in Africa* (ARIA) which would be the main document for the 2001 Forum. The Report would be published annually and the Commission expected the effective involvement of regional and sub-regional economic communities.

86. Other Commission-wide activities that occurred in 2000 included the Knowledge Networks: Database on African Experts and the African Knowledge Network Forum (AKNF); the “Big Table” of OECD-African Countries; Partnership with the Department of International Development (DFID-UK); and the New Global Compact with Africa.

87. The Committee was briefed on major events planned for 2001 and member States and interested organizations and individuals were invited to consult ECA’s websites on the Internet and to obtain some basic documents from the SRDC-SA.

88. On the ECA sub-programme on economic and social policy, the representative of the Economic and Social Policy Division (ESPD) introduced the areas of focus including the economic growth and the transformation needed to reduce poverty. Two subsidiary issues dealt with promoting income distribution as well as trade and investment, which constitute a vicious circle of growth and economic development. He indicated that the Division worked in three teams: Growth and Resource Mobilization; Trade and Investment Promotion and Debt Management; and Poverty Analysis and Social Policy.

89. He then presented the ECA Global Compact with Africa, an ECA initiative being supervised by ESPD. The Global Compact has the following goals: Creating capable states to reverse the declining economic performance registered since African countries accessed to independence (i.e. since the 1960’s); Achieving sustainable growth with a view to reducing poverty and ensuring structural transformation; and Promoting regional integration.

90. He said that a key idea featuring in the Compact related to the need for transformation partnership with Africa on issues such as new aid modalities, debt relief, market access, as
well as reforming international trade and financial architecture. With regards to the implementation of the Compact, he stressed the need to start with a clear understanding as to why previous initiatives had failed. In so doing, Africa should bear in mind the importance of ownership and participation in policy formulation and implementation, the division of labour which should establish clear responsibilities for each category of stakeholder (accountability), the financing of development tied to the issues of resource mobilization from both internal and external origins, and the centrality of strategies as well as the continent's ability to persevere in continued efforts.

He stressed that the overarching challenge under the Global Compact with Africa was poverty reduction. He then proposed that the way forward should be directed towards establishing stable and sound macroeconomic environment and policies; involving more private sector involvement in development; reaching greater financial depth by elevating the level of “monetization” of the economy (GDP); as well as promoting public provision of essential social services such as health and education. Political commitment as well as stability are also key elements for Africa to achieve the ambitious goals of halving poverty by reaching 7.1% growth rate in sub-Saharan Africa; targeting an investment rate as high as 40%; and substantially reducing external debt from its current level.

In the discussion that followed, the meeting raised such fundamental questions and issues as implementation of the Compact, development paradigms, and collaboration and partnership. Delegates observed the apparent difficulties African economies had in reconciling the contradictions between the broad-based pro-poor growth strategies and the Washington Consensus.

Moreover, in the presence of weak economic structures, especially non-performing and weak private sector, how the States and public sector could lead structural transformation, specifically assist in the diversification of narrow products and export based economies. In the area of forging effective partnership between ECA and member States, it was noted that strong collaboration was indispensable for the effective implementation of the Compact.

The participants also emphasised that strengthening, and creating in some cases, of a strong private sector was very much needed on the continent as sustainable development would not take place if private sector operators and organizations did not play a central role by contributing to agricultural and industrial development and accessing external markets. The participants also noted that developed countries were often reluctant to open markets to products from African countries.

Finally, the meeting recommended to ECA to pursue its efforts and adequately inform the member States of services, products and documentation the Commission produces. It was, for instance, suggested that ICE meetings be used to disseminate ECA's major publications, to including the annual Economic Report on Africa (ERA).

In response, the Secretariat informed the meeting that recently there had been a consensus on broadening the development agenda, which is beyond the narrow-focussed Washington Consensus. In this line, the main issue was the 'quality' rather than the 'quantity' of public intervention for pro-poor growth strategies given the trend of globalization and
liberalization. The meeting was also informed that in order to strengthen the private sector, the partnership between public and private sectors was essential and the measures based on incentives provision were critical. For the issue of forging partnership, it was noted that one of the key focus of the Compact was strengthening the partnership among key development stakeholders for its effective implementation.

H. Reports by Cooperating Partners (Agenda item 9)

97. The following organizations made presentations: IDEP, ESAMI, COMESA, OAU, SADC and MEPC.

98. Dr. Samuel A. Ochola, Director of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), made a presentation on the activities of the Institute, which is based in Dakar, Senegal. Since its establishment in 1962, IDEP has continued to assist African countries in capacity building. Among the programme activities of the Institute, which are interdependent are: training; research; consultancy and advisory services; workshops, seminars, conferences and public lectures; and documentation and publications. The training component includes: MA Degree on Economic Policy Analysis and Management.

99. In the implementation of its activities, IDEP has established institutional collaboration arrangements with a number of universities, training institutions, research institutions, UN Agencies, as well as international and regional institutions involved in economic development. In conclusion, Dr. Ochola urged member States to send representatives to the training programmes which the institute has planned to hold during 2001. These are on: Economic Cooperation and Integration, Training of Trainers on Innovative Management (PPP) and for Portuguese-speaking countries on Agricultural Project Preparation, Evaluation and Implementation.

100. The representative of ESAMI gave a background on the structure of ESAMI, and the presentation focused on the restructuring of the Institute particularly the establishment of four Directorates namely: Management Training; Consultancy and Customised Training Programmes; Research and Publications; and the Business School. These Directorates were created to give more focus on the implementation of its tripartite mandate of applied management research, consultancy and management training. Activities of each of the four Directorates were outlined, including the vision, mission, objectives and strategies.

101. ESAMI/UNECA/SRDC cooperation had been going on for the past twenty years mainly in the area of Management Development. ESAMI continued to invite ECA experts in various areas. The most notable ones have been in Transport and Infrastructure Programmes especially: Transport Policy and Planning; Rural Transport Services; and Road and Traffic Safety Management. Further consultations would be undertaken on this matter. ECA had also continued to invite ESAMI to present papers at the UN African Road Safety Congresses. ESAMI participated at the 2nd and 3rd Congress held in 1989 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Pretoria in 1996 respectively. ESAMI also participates in the UNECA African Centre for Women (ACW) programme of activities. UNECA invites ESAMI to undertake consultancy assignments. In the recent past (1998) ESAMI has conducted a Skills Audit for UNECA. There was a lot of scope of enhancing cooperation between ESAMI and the UNECA/SRDC/SA.
102. The representative of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) informed the meeting that collaboration with ECA/SRDC-SA had intensified in the last few years, particularly in the areas of gender in development, transport and communications, mining and in the preparation of SADC Annual Report. She indicated that both institutions were working closely towards engendering of the SADC HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework and Programme 2000-2004. In the area of mining, the SADC representative commended ECA for the study undertaken on Investment Promotion for Small Scale Mining Enterprises. She however, expressed concern that the study only covered few SADC member States. She therefore requested ECA to broaden the study to other SADC member States.

103. She noted that the following areas needed further collaboration between ECA and SADC: preparation of the SADC Annual Report 2001/2002; restructuring of the SADC Secretariat, which would involve revision of the Treaty; studies on regional indicative development plan; and the establishment of a Regional Development Fund.

104. The Assistant Secretary General of the OAU in charge of Community Affairs Department, Ambassador Lawrence Agubuzu, provided an overview on ECA/OAU co-operation in Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the SRDC-SA. He noted the important role of the ECA/OAU/ADB Joint Secretariat of AEC in supporting socio-economic development activities on the continent. He pointed out that sometimes this relationship was hampered because African leaders and policy-makers pursued policies which were not properly understood by the people and were not effectively implemented to make a difference in the welfare of the citizens.

105. The Assistant Secretary General challenged that Africa did not produce enough, either in primary commodities or otherwise, to effectively participate in a competitive global market. While there was a need to increase the provision of education to close the technological gap, he concluded by stressing the need for a deeper reflection on Africa's development priorities and strategies so that educated Africans could use their education to contribute to Africa's development and to improve the lot of the people.

106. In the discussion participants alluded to the need to re-examine Africa's development strategies.

107. The Representative from COMESA presented a document entitled “Collaboration between ECA and COMESA”. Since establishment of PTA, COMESA had always enjoyed full support and extensive collaboration of ECA in areas of transport, industry, monetary matters, gender and capacity building. Recently, ECA assisted COMESA in the Restructuring and Reorganization exercise and study on Self-Financing Scheme. The work towards establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC) is another area of co-operation.

108. Over the years, SRDC-SA designed work programmes which addressed the needs of subregional organizations, including COMESA, which is also supportive of recent ECA initiatives such as the Global Compact with Africa and the ADF 2001. COMESA identified priority activities for close collaboration with the Centre, namely, assessment of the impact of FTA, operationalisation of the common external tariff, tax policy harmonization,
infrastructure development, women in business (WIB) and gender policy.

109. In response to questions of coverage of COMESA activities, the representative of COMESA informed the meeting that in general most of its programmes were for implementation in all its member States. The exception to the preceding were those programmes, such as the African Trade Insurance Programme, which needed special accession to and were open to non-member States. The meeting noted the report.

110. The Director of the Minerals and Energy Policy Centre (MEPC), Dr. Wilfred Lombe, presented a report on areas of collaboration with ECA. He reported on past, present and planned activities in minerals and energy development. He stated that MEPC intended to collaborate with ECA in the following areas: research to support development and harmonization of robust policies and strategies; promotion of regional cooperation and integration; capacity building and stakeholder engagement to support sustainable development of minerals and energy resources; and sharing of intellectual and information resources. In order to formalize the cooperation, the Centre prepared a draft Memorandum of Understanding for consideration by ECA.

111. The meeting reiterated the importance of including private based organizations in the activities of the SRDC and commended the SRDC for inviting MEPC to the meeting.

I. Regional Priorities and Programme of Work of ECA/SRDC-SA
(Agenda item 10)

112. The Meeting considered the document entitled “Regional Priorities and Programme of Work of the SRDC/SA” derived from the Medium Term Plan 2002-2005, which was endorsed by the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) at its Sixth Meeting in 2000. The purpose of the report was, therefore, to present the Work Programme for the biennium 2002-2003, as approved by the General Assembly, to the Committee for consideration and to seek support from the member States in its implementation.

113. The objectives of the work programme for the 2002-2003 biennium were highlighted as follows: to promote the harmonization of national policies in various sectors in support of the integration activities at the subregional level; to facilitate the adoption and implementation of programmes for integration of national economies; and to provide support to the Member States and their inter-governmental organizations in their effort to foster growth and development.

114. In order to achieve the above objectives, ECA-SRDC-SA would continue to work through and co-operate with established organizations (COMESA, IOC, SADC, etc) and institutions (ESAMI, PAID-ESA, etc), as well as with United Nations agencies and development partners active in the sub-region. The programme was tailored specifically to the priorities and requirements of Southern African countries and regional economic communities.

115. The activities of the Centre towards achieving the above objectives consisted of: providing technical support to the regional economic communities (RECs) and member States in policy reforms and institutional building for implementing priority community
programmes; providing a forum to facilitate networking and dialogue among public sector, private sector and civil society to discuss regional development problems and prospects through meetings, workshops, seminars, symposia and publications; facilitating integration activities of the United Nations System and specialized agencies, in the framework of UN Resident Co-ordinator System at the national level; and, extending the outreach of ECA in Southern Africa to better serve the member States and to bring ECA closer to its member States.

116. The Director of the SRDC-SA emphasized the importance of group training activities as very effective fora for capacity building. However, he informed the meeting that funds were not usually allocated for these activities. This implied that the Centre had to collaborate with all the stakeholders in the subregion in order to mobilize the necessary resources. The following group training activities have been programmed for the period 2002-2003:

- Workshop on growth strategies for poverty reduction;
- Subregional seminar on the implementation of nexus issues of population, environment, sustainable development and Agriculture (PEDA) model in Southern Africa;
- Symposium on trade and investment promotion in Southern Africa;
- Subregional training workshop on issues and trends in decentralization for improved local governance;
- Workshop on Customs as a tool for economic integration;
- Special Event which will focus on information and communications technology and governance in Southern Africa.

117. The Director called upon the meeting to take actions in support of the Centre as follows: endorse the work programme of SRDC-SA for the biennium 2002-2003; appeal to member States to support extension of the Pilot Project on the Promotion of the Informal Sector for Development in Africa; appeal to member States to designate national focal points for ECA programme in each country; appeal to member States to support the work of SRDC-SA by pledging financial contributions through UNTFAD.

118. The meeting deliberated on the following issues:

(i) The need to extend the priority areas for the Centre to cover sustainable development, environmental protection, minerals and energy development.
(ii) The need to mainstream the workshops into the programme to ensure full financing.
(iv) Reformulation of the Workshop on Trade and Investment to cover the broader issues on investment.
(v) Continuation of the holding of ICE annually.
(vi) The need to balance the responsibilities given to the SRDC-SA and resources allocated.

119. In response to the above, the Secretariat informed the meeting that, within the UN system, there were specialized agencies which addressed issues on sustainable development and environmental issues. ECA's role was limited to advocacy. In this regard, the sub-programme on Food Security and Sustainable Development was established to support African countries in the follow-up to major international agreements.

120. Following the above information, the meeting requested ECA to investigate modalities for supporting those countries which had not received any assistance from donors, in the preparation of their country positions for the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in South Africa 2002.

121. With regard to mining and energy programmes, the meeting was informed that while realizing the importance of addressing these areas, the Centre did not have an expert in this area. The Centre was currently addressing this issue with ECA management.

122. The ECA representative explained that funding of workshops, although included in the programme budget, did not cover travel and daily subsistence allowances for participants. Modalities for funding this aspect needed to be revisited by member States. The UNTFAD Pledging Conference to be held during the ECA Conference of Ministers in Algiers, Algeria from 2-10 May, 2001 presented a very good opportunity for addressing this issue.

123. The ECA, at the request of COMESA, agreed to modify the coverage of the Workshop on Trade and Investment to include the broader issues on investment. This workshop would be organized in collaboration with COMESA.

124. On the concern about changing the organization of the ICE from an annual to a biennial event, the ECA Secretariat advised the meeting that this aspect should be included in the report and tabled during the forthcoming TEPCOW Meeting to be held in Algiers, Algeria in May 2001. The meeting, after a lengthy debate, adopted the recommendations of the report.

J. Any Other Business (Agenda item 11)

125. The representative of COMESA informed the meeting that COMESA had conference facilities which the SRDC-SA could make use of in the future.

K. Date and Venue of Next Meeting (Agenda item 12)

126. The representative of Lesotho offered to host the next ICE meeting. The Committee warmly accepted the offer and the date would be agreed upon after due consultations with
Adoption of Report (Agenda item 13)

127. The Committee adopted the report after amendments.

Closure of Meeting (Agenda item 14)

128. The Director of the SRDC-SA thanked the Government of the Republic of Zambia for hosting the ICE Meeting; the bureau; the participants and cooperating partners for their support; the ECA Divisions at Headquarters for their continued support, especially DISD, DMD, the SRDC Coordinating Unit and ESPD. Mr. Okello acknowledged the presence of the participation of the OAU by Ambassador Lawrence O. C. Agubuzu, Assistant Secretary General.

129. The Vice Chairperson, Ms. Jovelina Imperial Goma from Angola, thanked the Government of the Republic of Zambia for hosting the meeting; the ECA for inviting Angola to the meeting; participants for their contribution, and the members of the bureau. She noted that although there was a problem with the language, she hoped this would be overcome in the future. She then declared the meeting closed.
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