

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa



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UNECA  
at 35



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## Foreword

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**A**niversaries are occasions for looking at the past in order to improve our understanding of the present; for examining the present with a view to gaining insights for the future; and for anticipating the future in order to better prepare for its many challenges. This publication, released to mark the end of the 35th anniversary of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the beginning of its 36th, undertakes all these tasks. As a record of UNECA's past, this document gives an historical account of UNECA's early years, describes its mandate, and explains the nature and scope of its activities in support of the socio-economic development of the member States of the Commission. It is helpful to mention that the record of UNECA's performance in its first twenty-five years of existence had been documented in its Silver Jubilee publication *"25 Years of Service to African Development and Integration"*. This current publication necessarily draws upon and updates that silver jubilee publication.

The establishment of UNECA in 1958 coincided with the period of accelerated momentum for national independence for African countries. Then, as now, UNECA recognized that the only way it can best serve the member States is to remain at the forefront of strategic policy innovations on Africa's socio-economic development. In concrete terms, this implied a two-fold task: tailoring its activities to the priorities of member

States and alerting them to emerging problems, issues and trends that would have an influence on their socio-economic development. Thus, UNECA responded to the needs of newly independent African countries by assisting them to build and strengthen their human and institutional capacity for socio-economic management. UNECA articulated policies, strategies, programmes and plans for development. UNECA recognized the imperative of regional cooperation and integration, and facilitated the creation of some of the sub-regional economic communities as well as regional institutions in areas as diverse as banking, technology, engineering, management and social development. UNECA responded to the need to eliminate several constraints on regional integration by promoting regional and international initiatives for developing transport, communications and industrial infrastructures. UNECA also undertook initiatives to foster awareness on popular participation and human-centred development.

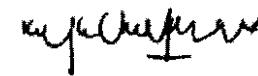
In retrospect, it is clear that the mandate of the Commission was designed to grasp the opportunities for change and retain the promise of continuity. The element of change is evident in the way the activities of the Commission have evolved over the years, in response to the expressed or emerging needs of member States. The element of continuity in all these is traceable to its terms of reference which include: "to initiate and participate in

measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic development of Africa, including its social aspects, with a view to raising the level of economic activity and levels of living in Africa ..." Thus, whether UNECA is playing the role of builder of African institutional capacity for development; articulator of policies and strategies for Africa's socio-economic development; or a promoter and provider of technical cooperation for development of African countries, the common thread that runs through these various roles is the mandate to promote the socio-economic development of Africa.

As concerns the way forward, new signposts have been erected for the Commission by way of the global and regional agendas adopted since the beginning of the 1990s. We can point to the Abuja Treaty on the establishment of the African Economic Community which provides a framework for intensified and expanded activities in the area of regional cooperation and integration. Equally, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) provides a broad context within which to pursue economic recovery and development activities. As the main regional arm of the United Nations devoted to socio-economic development in Africa, UNECA's future programme priorities seek to respond to the objectives and strategies embodied in such landmark documents as Agenda 21 on Environment and Sustainable Development and will also incorporate whatever emerges from other forthcoming major international conferences as the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the World Summit on

Social Development(1995) and the Conference on Women and Development (1995).

In just over a year from now, the United Nations will celebrate its 50th anniversary. The objective of the United Nations as stated in its Charter is to promote international peace and security by removing the scourge of war and promoting conditions of economic and social progress in larger freedom. The institutional structures of the United Nations reflect the preoccupations with peace and development. No where is the relationship between the two so vividly illustrated than in Africa. UNECA will increasingly become the primary vehicle for fulfilling the goals of peace and development at the regional level. Africa's long-term sustainable development is a special, indeed a sacred responsibility of which UNECA is constantly mindful. It has been the main inspiration for UNECA's work in the past, and will be in the future.



**Iyayashi Yaker**

United Nations Under-Secretary-General,  
Executive Secretary of the  
Economic Commission for Africa.

April 1994

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# I. Introduction

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On 29 April 1958, the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 671A (XXV) established the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and selected, by ballot, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as the headquarters of the Commission. The establishment of UNECA followed that of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) which was founded back in 1947 primarily to engage in post-war reconstruction of Europe. The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East and the Economic Commission for Latin America were created some years after the ECE for the reconstruction and development of their respective sub-regions.

The sequence of events that led to the creation of UNECA began when a resolution was submitted to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) calling for the establishment of an economic commission for North Africa and Ethiopia, but no action was taken. The matter was brought up again in 1950, 1951, and 1956. However, all of these initiatives ended in frustration and failure. Those holding a contrary view claimed that Africa was not a homogenous region and that a commission might not be able to cope with the complexities of the continent. The final push for its formation occurred in the twelfth session of the General Assembly in 1957. On the recommendation of the Second Committee, the General Assembly, by resolution 1155 (XII) of 26 November 1957, requested the Economic and Social

Council to give prompt and favourable consideration, at its next session, to the establishment of an economic commission for Africa for the purpose of giving aid to the countries and territories of Africa in accordance with Article 68 of the Charter. The efforts paid off with the adoption, on 29 April 1958, of ECOSOC resolution 671A.

On the day UNECA was created, there were nine independent African States (Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, the United Arab Republic of Egypt, South Africa, the Sudan and Tunisia). More significantly, no other continent-wide, inter-governmental institution existed at the time to concern itself with the problems, hopes and aspirations of the African peoples. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) was established five years later in 1963 and the African Development Bank, in 1964. The initial budget (less than \$1 million) was modest. Throughout the years the drive, determination and dedication of the nine independent African States that had pioneered the impetus to establish the Commission provided the main inspiration for its work.

The major concern of the first regional commission was the economic reconstruction of war-devastated areas. Gradually, however, the wider field of economic cooperation and development, as well as the need to raise the level of economic

activity in each respective region and to maintain and strengthen the economic relations of the countries both among themselves and with other countries took prominence. UNECA embarked along this road with three organizational units - Research (economic, social and statistical), Agriculture, and Community Development with emphasis on social welfare services. A Division of Industry, Transport and Natural Resources was added in 1960. In 1963, Trade, Survey and Research emerged along with Training, Technical Assistance Co-ordination and Information. The secretariat's structure has undergone further modifications over the years to reflect the concerns and the changing development needs of its member States.

Between 1958 and 1982, 41 African countries achieved independence and became full members of the Commission. Today, membership of the Commission comprises 53 independent African countries.

### *UNECA's Mandate*

The Commission's terms of reference were originally laid down by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 671A (XXV) of 29 April 1958. They were subsequently amended by ECOSOC resolution 974 D.1 (XXXVI) of 5 July 1963, resolution 1343 (XIV) of 18 July 1968 and resolution 1978/68 of 4 August 1978, and are now as follows:

#### *Terms of Reference of the Commission*

1. The Economic Commission for Africa, acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Economic and Social

Council, shall, provided that the commission can take no action with respect to any country without the agreement of that country:

- (a) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic development of Africa, including its social aspects, with a view to raising the level of economic activity and standards of living in Africa, and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of countries and territories of Africa, both among themselves and with other countries of the world;
- (b) Make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within the territories of Africa as the Commission deems appropriate, and disseminate the results of such investigation and studies;
- (c) Undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate;
- (d) Perform, within the available resources of its secretariat, such advisory services as the countries and territories of the region may desire, provided that such services do not overlap with those rendered by other bodies of the United Nations or by the specialized agencies;

- (e) Assist the Council at its request in discharging its functions within the region in connection with any economic problems, including problems in the field of technical assistance;
  - (f) Assist in the formulation and development of co-ordinated policies as a basis for practical action in promoting economic and technological development in the region;
  - (g) In carrying out the above functions, deal as appropriate with the social aspects of economic development and the inter-relationship of economic and social factors.
2. The Commission is empowered to make recommendations on any matters within its competence directly to the Governments of the members or associate members concerned, to Governments admitted in a consultative capacity, and to the specialized agencies. The Commission shall submit for prior consideration by the Economic and Social Council any of its proposals for activities that would have important effects on the economy of the world as a whole.
  3. The Commission may, after discussion with any specialized agency concerned and with the approval of the Economic and Social Council, establish such subsidiary bodies as it

deems appropriate for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities.

4. The geographical scope of the Commission's work shall be the whole continent of Africa, Madagascar and other African islands.

The mandate of UNECA was further strengthened by UN General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977, which designated the regional commissions as the "main centres of general economic and social development for their respective regions" and required them to "exercise team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination and cooperation at the regional level, taking into account the special needs of their respective regions", as well as resolution 33/202 of 29 January 1979 which accorded executing agency status to the regional commissions.

### *Legislative Organs of the Commission*

#### **A. The Conference of Ministers**

The Conference of Ministers, established by resolution 188 (IX) of 10 February 1969, is the highest legislative organ of the Commission and is composed of the Ministers of Governments of the member States responsible for economic and social development and planning. It meets every year at its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, unless it is invited by a member State.

The main functions of the Conference of Ministers are to:

- (a) Consider matters of policy and the priorities to be assigned to the programmes and other activities of the Commission;
- (b) Consider intra-African and international economic policy issues and make recommendations on such issues to member States;
- (c) Review programme implementation during the preceding year and approve at every other meeting the proposed biennial programme of work and priorities;
- (d) Consider reports submitted to it by the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole;
- (e) Consider questions relating to the representation of the African region on international and inter-governmental bodies dealing with economic and social matters;
- (f) Consider and endorse for onward transmission to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly proposals emanating from sectoral ministerial conferences; and
- (g) Consider the work programmes of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) and integrate these with the overall programme of work and priorities of the Commission.

#### **B. The Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole**

The Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole is composed of high-level officials representing member States of the Commission and coming principally from ministries responsible for economic planning and development, industry, trade, transport and finance. It is the advisory body of the Conference of Ministers. Its meeting immediately precedes those of the Conference of Ministers. The main functions of the Committee are to:

- (a) Make proposals on Africa's overall development strategies and policies;
- (b) Recommend regional and subregional development objectives and Africa's objectives for each United Nations Development Decade;
- (c) Formulate the Commission's plans and biennial programmes of work and priorities and, in this connection, spell out the programming implications of the decisions of the various sectoral ministerial conferences and the MULPOC ministerial councils, as well as the recommendations of the specialized subsidiary bodies, with a view to including the programmes and projects arising thereof in the medium-term plans and biennial programmes of work and priorities of the Commission;
- (d) Review annually the implementation of the work programmes and priorities of the Commission;

- (e) Submit recommendations on the above to the Conference of Ministers of the Commission.

### **C. The Sectoral Ministerial Conferences**

Each sectoral ministerial conference is composed of Ministers of the Governments of member States responsible for a particular sector and assisted by a committee of officials drawn from the ministries responsible for that particular sector and nominated by their Governments on the basis of their specialized knowledge. The tasks of the sectoral ministerial conferences are primarily to:

- (a) Review problems and issues pertaining to their respective development sectors;
- (b) Formulate regional policies, strategies and priorities on the sectors within their respective fields of competence;
- (c) Identify areas for multinational cooperation and integration; and,
- (d) Formulate sectoral work programmes and priorities, which are subsequently harmonized with the overall work programmes and priorities of the Commission by the Conference of Ministers of UNECA, acting on the advice of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole.

The thematic conferences of ministers which exist at present are as follows:

- (i) Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and the Environment;
- (ii) Conference of African Ministers of Industry;
- (iii) Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Trade, Regional Cooperation and Integration and Tourism
- (iv) Conference of African Ministers Responsible for the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources and Energy
- (v) Conference of African Ministers of Transport and Communications
- (vi) Conference of African Ministers responsible for Finance
- (vii) The Conference of Ministers responsible for Human Development

### **D. Technical subsidiary bodies of the Commission**

The following are the technical subsidiary bodies of the Commission:

- (i) Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers and Information Scientists
- (ii) African Regional Conference for Science and Technology
- (iii) United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa environment
- (iv) Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development

## ***The Secretariat***

### **A. Headquarters**

The secretariat of the Commission is headed by the United Nations Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary who is appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The staff of the Commission are staff of the United Nations Secretariat. The staff complement of the secretariat in 1993 was 242 Professionals and 446 General Service Staff.

The UNECA secretariat is the core of the Commission. At its apex is the Cabinet Office of the Executive Secretary (COES) under which come the Policy and Programme Coordination Office (PPCO), the Pan-African Documentation and Information Services unit (PADIS), the Technical Assistance Coordination and Operations Office (TACOO), the Multi-disciplinary Regional Advisory Group (MRAG), the Economic Cooperation Office and the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW).

The substantive divisions/offices of the Commission are:

1. Economic Co-operation Office (ECO);
2. Socio-economic Research and Planning Division (SERPD);
3. Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division (JEFAD);
4. Industry and Human Settlements Division (IHSD);
5. Trade Development and Finance Division (TDFD);
6. Natural Resources Division (NRD)

7. Transport, Communications and Tourism Division (TCTD);
8. Public Administration, Human Resources and Social Development Division (PHSD);
9. Technical Assistance Coordination and Operations Office (TACOO);
10. Statistics Division; and
11. Population Division

A restructuring exercise is currently underway.

### **B. MULPOCS**

With a view to decentralizing the Commission's activities and improving its efficiency, UNECA Conference of Ministers, at its fourth meeting adopted Resolution 311 (XIII), to establish Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) in the five subregions of Africa as follows:

1. Lusaka (Zambia) - based MULPOC serving 20 East and Southern African countries;
2. Gisenyi (Rwanda) - based MULPOC serving three countries which constitute the Economic Community of the Great Lakes (CEPGL);
3. Yaounde (Cameroon) -based MULPOC serving seven countries in Central Africa;

4. Niamey (Niger) - based MULPOC serving 16 countries which are members of the Economic Community of West African states (ECOWAS);
5. Tangier (Morocco) - based MULPOC serving six countries of North Africa.

The establishment of the MULPOCs was an important step towards the transformation of UNECA into an operational institution. It emphasized the practical and operational role which UNECA intends to play in promoting subregional cooperation and integration as a step towards regional economic integration. The priority sectors of the MULPOC work programmes are agriculture, industry, transport and communications, trade promotion, natural resources including energy, and human resources. In these fields, they assist in generating and cementing the process of economic integration in their respective subregions. They serve as a first and pragmatic step towards the creation of a regional economic community. Each MULPOC operates through an Intergovernmental Committee of Experts which meets every two years and reports to the Conference of Ministers responsible for Trade, Regional Cooperation and Integration, and to the Commission through its Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW).

While each MULPOC is primarily responsible for the promotion of multinational and multi-sectoral projects within its particular subregion in line with the priorities laid down by its specific policy organs, the five MULPOCs together can be viewed as one regional team with a single purpose - the forging and promotion of sub-regional common markets as a first step towards a regional common market. In recognition of their important catalytic role in promoting regional cooperation and integration,

the United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 46/185 of 1991, decided to strengthen the MULPOCs by allocating more resources to them.

### C. Programme Focus

UNECA's programmes focus on the following areas:

- (a) Human development, including women in development;
- (b) Science and technology;
- (c) Fostering human-centred sustainable development;
- (d) Agriculture and rural development;
- (e) Promoting industrialization and infrastructural development;
- (f) Ensuring a balance between food supply, population, human settlements and environment;
- (g) Achieving structural transformation and diversification of African economies;
- (h) Enhancing the efficiency of the public sector in promoting economic development and in fostering entrepreneurship in the private sector;

- (i) Strengthening Africa's existing information network, namely PADIS, to provide member States with economic and social data and information;
- (j) Advocacy on Africa's socio-economic development;
- (k) Promoting regional co-operation and integration.

#### **D. Funding/Resources**

The UNECA secretariat depends on two principal sources of finance: the regular budget through which the United Nations General Assembly appropriates resources to UNECA, and extrabudgetary resources - that is, contributions from bilateral donor countries and institutions and from United Nations organizations and specialized agencies.

## II. UNECA: Building African Institutional Capacity for Economic and Social Development

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When the Commission was established in 1958, most African countries were emerging from the dark corridors of colonialism. Their trade was shackled to the economies of Western Europe in such a way that the continent produced raw materials for European markets and served as a captive market for European finished goods. Education was tailored to the needs of colonial powers who only needed middle-echelon cadres to ensure proper functioning of colonial administration. The only existing inter-governmental institutions on the African landscape were those established by the metropolitan powers designed solely to promote their interests - they "were in Africa but not of Africa".

In order to promote self-reliant socio-economic development and to build indigenous capacity, ECA spearheaded the establishment of many African inter-governmental institutions in various economic and social fields. The major factors that influenced the establishment of these institutions were that substantial cost effectiveness could be achieved if countries in a given subregion, or the African region as a whole, established and shared a single institution in a particular sector, instead of independently developing their own small institutions. The common use of facilities and services would thus help African

countries derive benefits beyond the scope of their individual financial contributions. It would also encourage them to engage in forms of technical and economic cooperation among themselves which would further promote the process of integration.

Sub-regional institutions were thus created to enhance integrated development efforts at the sub-regional level in areas such as trade, maritime transport and mineral resources. Regional institutions were established to support development efforts in the African region as a whole. These institutions were to build and strengthen capabilities and capacities in strategic fields such as science and technology, engineering design and manufacturing, remote sensing, and planning and management.

The practice of development planning which came with independence, exposed the rather weak state of the planning and statistical infrastructure which the African countries had inherited from the colonial powers; it was then realized that there was a dire need to build up a statistical infrastructure which would respond to national needs and priorities. Consequently, during the 1960s and 1970s the statistical development activities were devoted to conceptualization, statistical needs assessment, statistical organization and training.

In 1961, the second session of the Conference of African Statisticians initiated an intensive training programme to overcome staff shortages in statistical offices of the region. Emphasis was initially placed on middle-level training, with more gradual development of professional facilities. This led, in the same year, to the establishment of four middle level statistical training centres in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) and Yaoundé (Cameroon) for French-speaking trainees, and in Achimota (Ghana) and Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) for English-speaking trainees. That same year, another centre was established at Ibadan (Nigeria). Concurrently, a project was started in Rabat (Morocco) at the professional level, in the French language. In 1962, the French language group was provided with additional professional facilities in Paris with support from the European Economic Community (EEC). In 1963, the centre in Abidjan introduced professional training, but it was not until 1967 that regional facilities at the professional level became available in Kampala (Uganda) for the English-speaking group. An additional middle-level centre was established for the English-speaking group in Dar-es-Salaam in 1965, jointly by the East African Common Service Organization (EACSO) and the United Nations. In 1976, the middle-level centres in Yaoundé also introduced professional training and the ingénieur des travaux statistiques division in Paris was transferred to Kigali (Rwanda) for the benefit of the French language group. It should be noted that training at the professional level for the English language group is also available in University degree courses in Ibadan, Legon, Gaborone and Maseru.

During the Commission's formative years, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) in Dakar, Senegal, and the African Development Bank (ADB) in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, were established at the Commission's initiative.

These two institutions, the IDEP and ADB, were to deal with two basic problems facing the region, namely, the training of staff in planning for the economic and social development of African countries, and the mobilization of capital for the execution of economic development programmes of African countries. Next, was the creation of the Association of African Central Banks (AACB) in 1968 to promote monetary and financial integration in Africa. The AACB, to which all African banks belong, developed steadily and established subsidiary organs such as the African Centre for Monetary Studies (ACMS), the Clearing House of the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA), the West African Clearing House (WACH) and the Central African Clearing House (CACH). In order to advise member States on tax administration issues, the Association of African Tax Administrators (AATA) was established .

All told, there are 30 such institutions, promoting technical cooperation among member countries in areas such as finance and banking; natural resources; engineering design and manufacturing; industrial development; science and technology; economic planning and management; trade; transport and communications; cartography and remote sensing.

In order to promote industrialization and technological transformation on the continent, UNECA has been instrumental in establishing the requisite inter-governmental institutions: *The African Regional Centre for Technology, Dakar, Senegal; The African Regional Centre for Engineering Design and Manufacturing, Ibadan, Nigeria; The African Regional Standards Organisation, Nairobi, Kenya; The African Regional Industrial Property Organisation, Harare, Zimbabwe; and The African Organisation for Intellectual Property, Yaounde, Cameroon.* These institutions have provided services to African Governments,

including advice on suitable policies and strategies, and in the mobilising of human and other resources to promote science and technology towards the solution of their multiple development problems.

In the field of mineral resources, the Eastern and Southern Africa Mineral Resources Development Centre (ESAMRDC) was created in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and a similar one for Central Africa was established in Brazzaville, Congo, with the aim of promoting cooperation among African countries in this sector. The Brazzaville, Congo-based ESAMRDC opened in 1983. Since 1990, UNECA has been exploring the feasibility of a third centre for West African countries. At the initiative of UNECA, the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy (ARCSE) was established. UNECA was also instrumental in establishing the Technical Advisory Committee on the development of Nuclear Science and Technology in Africa (TACNUSTA).

In the area of cartography, four multinational institutions were established, namely: the erstwhile African Remote Sensing Council (Mali, 1979) and, in cooperation with the OAU, its successor, the African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing (Algiers, 1989); the three Regional Centres at Nigeria, Kenya and Burkina Faso, i.e., the Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys (RECTAS), the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS) and the Regional Remote Sensing Centre (CRTO), respectively. These institutions are owned and managed by member States who pool their resources together to provide services of a special nature beyond their individual financial means, among which the provision of training and assistance in the transfer of technology are of particular importance. Human

resources development and endogenous technical capacity building are directly addressed.

In pursuance of the goals of the Lagos Plan of Action, the UNECA secretariat played an important role in the establishment of the African Federation of Chambers of Commerce. The secretariat drafted the constitution, rules and procedures of the organs of the Federation, and organizational structures and budget.

The need to promote trade and achieve the physical and economic integration of the continent inspired UNECA to develop a number of important programmes in the field of transport and communications. In 1969, in collaboration with the OAU, the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) which is today a specialized agency of the OAU and the organ for consultation, co-ordination and formulation of air transport policies in Africa, was created. UNECA also assisted in the development of air transport services through joint activities with the Association of African airlines and the AFCAC, and has been instrumental in the conception and implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration on a new African Air Transport Policy.

In maritime transport, UNECA has created three sub-regional ports management associations for North Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa. Through these associations, cooperation between the ports of Africa has been significantly strengthened. UNECA is also assisting in the establishment of a coastal shipping company for West, Central and North African regions, as well as maritime transport coordinating bodies in Eastern and Southern Africa and North Africa.

The Union of African railways (UAR), which became a specialized regional institution of the OAU, was created at the initiative of UNECA in 1973. The UAR, which brings together all African Railways, is charged with the development of railways and rail transport in Africa by, among other things, promoting the interconnection of African railway systems. UNECA continues to assist UAR in developing and implementing programmes for this purpose. UNECA provides tremendous assistance to the UAR, primarily in the areas of management, maintenance and harmonization of the various networks.

UNECA has sponsored the establishment of lake and river basin organizations and commissions. The formation of the Association for the Advancement of Agricultural Sciences in Africa, and the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations are a further reflection of UNECA's efforts at indigenous institution building in Africa.

The Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) at the University of Ghana, Accra for mainly English-speaking countries and the Institute de formation et de recherche Démographiques (IFORD) at Yaounde, for Francophone countries were established to train population experts and demographers. Training at RIPS is conducted at three levels, namely the M.A., M. Phil and Ph.D. However, emphasis is on the M.A. programme. Since 1985/86, slightly more than 300 students completed the M.A. programme, about 30 finished the M.Phil and another five had completed the Ph.D. IFORD also runs a similar programme and has trained an equal number of experts. Nearly all countries in Africa have benefitted from training facilities at RIPS and IFORD, and have been able to increase the capacity of trained high-level population experts and demographers.

In order to strengthen the capacity of its member States in administration and management, UNECA established the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) aimed at providing training, research and consultancy services in public administration; The African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOD,) which encourages indigenous research and training in social development, and as previously mentioned, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, aimed at providing training and research and consultancy services in the area of economic development and planning. The Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) which has its headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania, was also set up to provide management training to the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa. It has provided a platform for cross-fertilization of experiences and ideas from business, financial and service organizations from various countries. The United Nations Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) in Kampala, Uganda, was set up to promote research and training in the area of crime prevention, social justice, well-being and stability.

UNECA's efforts at institution building go beyond the creation of sector-based or functional institutions for the promotion of cooperation among African countries. UNECA has been credited with having catalysed the sub-regional integration process by among other things, creating the requisite sub-regional organisations and institutions to manage the integration process. In West Africa, the main stimulus for present day ECOWAS dates back to a UNECA organized conference on economic co-operation in October/November 1966. A second meeting in April/May 1967 adopted a protocol on the creation of the West African Economic Community. Despite this obvious momentum

gained by economic integration in the subregion, it was only in 1975 that the negotiations for the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) were successfully concluded. UNECA has since been involved in this process of strengthening economic links among countries of a subregion.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, the dismantling in 1977 of the East African Community, which was a major success story in the African economic integration process, created both a vacuum and a sense of urgency for the formation of a sub-regional economic cooperation arrangement. The UNECA gave a new lease on life to the integration process in the sub-region by organizing and funding since 1978, a series of meetings which led to the establishment of the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA), in December 1981.

As for Central Africa, UNECA conducted the evaluation of the Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC) on the basis of which the 11 Heads of State of the subregion committed themselves, through the Libreville Declaration adopted in December 1981, to the enlargement of the economic integration scheme in central Africa. That was the starting point towards the establishment in October 1983 of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), following a negotiation process which was serviced jointly by the OAU and UNECA.

In North Africa, at the initiative of UNECA a meeting on economic co-operation issues was held in 1964 in Tangier, Morocco. Sectoral studies carried out from 1966 upon recommendation of the Maghreb Special Consultative Committee did not lead to a successful conclusion of talks. Nevertheless, in 1981 ECA undertook a fresh series of studies which elicited in 1987 the acceptance by the North African States of the principle of negotiations for the establishment of a preferential trade area in North Africa. Though the creation of the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) has resulted in a less active negotiation process for the establishment of a PTA in North Africa, the idea remains alive and the countries concerned are relaunching the process with UNECA's assistance.

A further significant initiative buttressing the regional and sub-regional groupings is the Abuja Treaty for the establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC) to help Africa move further down the road towards regional integration and cooperation -- long recognized as a major precondition for sustainable development. The coming into force of the treaty will be a watershed in Africa's development. UNECA played an active role in servicing the negotiations which led to the establishment of the AEC. Through the Joint OAU/UNECA/ADB secretariat, UNECA will continue to give active support to the implementation of the AEC. Already, it has taken part in the preparation of various protocols relating to the implementation of the treaty.

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### III. UNECA: Articulating Policies and Strategies for Africa's Socio-economic Development

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From the very beginning, UNECA recognized that the political independence of African countries would be of little value, unless it was buttressed by economic independence, which in turn must be based on self-reliance and self-sustainment. Thus, soon after UNECA established its own institutional infrastructures, it turned its attention to searching for a framework for Africa's socio-economic development. That search led to the articulation of Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s. This strategy analyzed economic problems of Africa in the context of underdevelopment and the international economic crisis and called, among other things, for the integration of Africa's economies as a matter of priority. Soon thereafter, a series of events including most notably the first oil crisis of 73/74 and proclamation of the New International Economic Order at the 6th special session of UN General Assembly in 1974, spelled out the need to undertake a reappraisal of development strategies hitherto pursued by African governments. The Revised framework of principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa (1976), was the outcome of this exercise. This self-searching evaluation was in fact the intellectual precursor to the Monrovia Strategy for Economic Development of Africa and Monrovia Declaration of Commitment on Guidelines for National and Collective Self-reliance adopted by

the 16th Summit of the OAU. The Monrovia Declaration itself paved the way for the landmark Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Final Act of Lagos (FAL) of 1980.

The importance of the Lagos Plan of Action derives from the fact that after two decades of independence, African countries represented at the highest levels of government, gave bold expression to the nature of development desired by them and the ways to pursue it. The plan articulated a coherent framework for bringing about a self-sustaining economic growth and development. The plan at once symbolized the charting of a new path for Africa's development by Africans and, at the same time, challenged conventional wisdom about African development. Two major adverse developments in the early 1980s, namely, the world recession of 1980-82 and the great drought of 1983-85 presented early impediments to the implementation of the LPA and ushered in a socio-economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. Emergency-to- short term measures were required to put Africa's economy on a path of self-sustained growth. UNECA responded by articulating, in collaboration with the OAU, the Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) which was adopted by the OAU Summit in 1985. This was subsequently endorsed by the 13th special session of UN

General Assembly in the form of the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD). UNPAAERD has been succeeded by the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF)

UNECA has been at the forefront in identifying the severe constraints that Africa's weak and inadequate transport and communications infrastructures impose on economic development of individual member States and on regional cooperation and integration. As early as 1967, the Commission had adopted resolutions recognizing the importance of various transport modes in the economic development of the region and initiated activities in the field. As an integral part of this initiative, UNECA developed the Trans-African Highways Programme whose goal is to remove the physical and non-physical barriers to intra-African trade and travel.

Meanwhile efforts are being made to address the non-physical impediments to intra-African trade and travel through measures such as rationalized transit charges, third party motor vehicle insurance schemes etc., in the transit transport corridors and in sub-regional transport operation programmes.

In the field of telecommunications, UNECA has been instrumental in the development of two major regional programmes: the Pan- african Telecommunications Network (PANAFTEL) and the Regional African Satellite Communications System (RASCOM). PANAFTEL is designed to create transit centres for telecommunications within Africa and to reduce dependence on out-of-region centres such as London and Paris. RASCOM, which has now become an independent commercial enterprise, was created to develop a regional African

satellite communication system primarily to extend telecommunications outreach to the rural areas of Africa.

The momentum for developing an integrated and comprehensive transport and communications system in Africa accelerated when the U.N. General Assembly proclaimed 1978-88 the **UN Transport and Communications Decade for Africa (UNTACDA I)** with UNECA designated as the lead agency. The objective of the programme is to develop the critical links in the African transport and communications system and improve its efficiency in order to promote the physical integration of the continent. In view of the magnitude of effort still required to overhaul and improve Africa's transport and communication infrastructures and services, UNECA and OAU once again recommended and in 1988, the General Assembly accepted, to proclaim 1991-2000 as **UNCTADA II**. The significance of the Decade lies in the fact that it galvanizes Africa's transport and communications and addresses its transport and communication problems in an integral and regional framework.

Within the context of implementing the International Strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade and industrial chapter of the Lagos Plan of Action, (UNIDO), UNECA and OAU sponsored the proclamation of the **First Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA I)** in the 1980s. The objectives of this Decade were to focus greater attention and mobilize greater political commitment and financial technical support at the national and regional levels for the industrialization of Africa as a basis for economic development and transformation. In recognition of the unfinished task, the 1990s have been designated as the **Second Industrial Decade for Africa (IDDA II)**.

Throughout the years, UNECA has played a pioneering role assisting member States in articulating and implementing human-focused development strategies that emphasize the centrality of man as a resource, a strategist, the final purpose and, indeed as the ultimate beneficiary of the fruits of the development process. This line of thinking has found expression in several seminal documents - notably the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP), and the Khartoum Declaration: Towards a Human-Focused Approach to Socio-economic Recovery and Development. The AAF-SAP holds that development has to be engineered and sustained by the people themselves through their full and active participation and not undertaken on their behalf, and that to achieve and sustain development, the education and training, health, well-being and vitality of the people must be assured so that they can participate fully and effectively in the development process.

On the other hand, The Khartoum Declaration which emphasises the centrality of the human dimension in any structural adjustment programme for the socio-economic development of the African people, further affirms that the human dimension is a *sine qua non* for economic recovery and development in Africa with the improvement of the human condition and welfare as the ultimate objective of development.

The African Charter for Social Action, adopted by the Fifth Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs in 1989, has as its principles, the respect for basic human rights, the needs and aspirations of the people, the pursuit of the goals of social justice and equity, access to social services by all, abolition of all forms of discrimination, recognition of the family as the nucleus of change and the equality of men and women in all spheres of

human endeavour. This constitutes a further contribution of UNECA to furthering the commitment of member States, to the ideals of social democracy for social stability and sustainable economic development.

The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development - another UNECA initiative - sets out the political, economic and social conditions that establish an enabling environment for people and their organisations to fully and freely take active part in decision-making on development issues. The Charter emphasizes that development cannot be attained or sustained without the popular support and full participation of the people, nor can the economic crisis be resolved, and the human conditions improved, without the full and effective contribution of the vast majority of the African people to the development process. The adoption of the Charter in 1990 is yet another milestone in UNECA's human-focused development strategy.

In March 1993, the Regional Conference on Development Management in Africa: Thirty Years of Experience, Emerging Challenges and Future Priorities, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, produced the Strategic Agenda for Development Management in Africa in the 1990s which UNECA Conference of Ministers also adopted in the same year. The Strategic Agenda incorporates an incisive statement of priorities and modalities for the reform of development administration and management in Africa during the rest of the 1990s; it underscores the fact that effective social and economic transformation of the continent is everyone's concern. In this regard the Strategic Agenda identifies priority areas for enhancing development administration and management capabilities and outlines the roles that can be played by national, regional and external actors in this regard.

The Regional Framework for Human Resources Development and Utilization in Africa was adopted by the Fourth Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Development and Utilization in Africa at its meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in November 1991. To promote the implementation of the Regional Framework, ECA has developed a Human Development Agenda for Africa in the 1990s which has put forward a programme and operational strategy for the implementation of the Regional Framework. The Agenda adopted by the nineteenth meeting of the UNECA Conference of Ministers held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in May 1993 is aimed at "democratization of development" through measures which include additional attention to agricultural production, private enterprise, health, education, population and the status of women and youth.

Following the activities of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), UNECA participated in promoting the implementation of a wide array of recommendations at the regional level. It is in this light that, in collaboration with UNEP, FAO and UNESCO, it organized the First Regional Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Kampala, Uganda in June 1989, which adopted the Kampala Agenda for Environment and Sustainable Development. The Kampala Agenda was Africa's foundation stone for the promotion of a new era of environment- development interaction. It provided the basis for the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 1992 at which Agenda 21 was adopted.

The UNCED preparatory process highlighted the importance or regional specificities in global environmental management. It led to the adoption of an African Common Position on

Environment and Development in the preparation of which, UNECA played a key role. In the post UNCED activities, the UNECA Ministers of Economic Planning and Development adopted in May 1993, the African Strategies for the Implementation of UNCED Agenda 21, emphasizing the regional aspects.

In the last ten years, African countries have come to realize that they have to give science and technology a proper orientation so as to be more effective in providing solutions to their socio-economic development problems. UNECA, through the former Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Science and Technology Development and through its many advisory services and voice at sub-regional, regional and international fora, has been successful in convincing decision-makers that, in the context of developing and least-developed countries, the very concept of science and technology has to be different. Unlike the approach adopted in developed countries where science and technology are construed as high level research and development, and training at tertiary level, in Africa, stress has to be laid on the application of available, off-the-shelf science and technology, as a start, and research should follow this application, based on needs arising from it. Efforts should be intensified to have research results commercialised, thus reaching and benefitting the consumer.

UNECA was the first of the United Nations regional commissions to have a programme specifically designed to promote and accelerate the integration of women in development, UNECA was already calling attention to that important but neglected dimension of development. As the mandate and activities expanded, the programme became, in 1975, what is presently known as the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW).

Through the assistance of ATRCW, national co-ordination structures for the integration of women in development have been established. Five sub-regional committees for the integration of women in development were established at the sub-regional level and representatives of these committees formed the African Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development, (ARCC) whose major responsibility is to provide ATRCW with policy guidance on issues concerning African women. Notable among ATRCW's recent activities is the promotion of women entrepreneurs. In this connection, ATRCW has undertaken research and provided technical support to national and sub-regional associations of women entrepreneurs. A Federation of African Women Entrepreneurs has just been established at UNECA's initiative, and efforts are under way to create an African Bank for Women.

Through the organization of regular regional population conferences, UNECA has increasingly enhanced knowledge of population problems in the region's socio-economic development. It formulated the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action (KPA) on Population and Self-Reliant Development. The second major regional conference is the Third African Population Conference which was held in Senegal in 1992. The Dakar/Ngor Declaration adopted by the African member States, spells out the African population agenda for the current decade and beyond.

The Commission has been in the forefront in bringing to the attention of the international community the African Debt Problem and participated fully in the preparation and the adoption of the

African Common Position on Africa's External Indebtedness, which was adopted by the Second Extra-ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in 1987. Furthermore, the inadequate information flows especially between African countries, constitutes a serious bottleneck in the development and expansion of intra-african trade. For this reason, and with a view to enhancing African Businessmen's awareness of trade possibilities, UNECA secretariat has been issuing the "African Trade Bulletin" supplemented by the "Flash on Trade Opportunities". In addition, the first volume of the African Trade Directory has been published. The UNECA secretariat has also been very active in the preparation and organization of trade fairs for African countries.

Lastly, in order to monitor the socio-economic situation in Africa, UNECA conducts and compiles every year the Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa and the Economic Report on Africa. The Survey provides a practical account of the major macro-economic conditions of the fifty two States of the region. The Economic Report provides an analysis of the main socio-economic trends and issues in the African Region in the current year and the outlook for the subsequent year. In addition, UNECA has conducted two major perspective studies of the African region in light of the long-term objectives of the regionally agreed development strategies. These are UNECA and Africa's Development: a Preliminary Perspective Study 1983-2008 and Beyond Recovery: UNECA Revised Development Perspective of Africa, 1988-2008.

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## IV. UNECA and Technical Cooperation

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Promoting cooperation among its member States has been one of the well acknowledged contributions of UNECA to Africa's development. UNECA contributes towards technical cooperation through research and technical studies that are aimed at providing the basis for policy making; training of indigenous manpower and other programmes for accelerating transfer of skills and knowledge; programmes of fellowship; creating institutional linkages and strengthening institutional capacity; advisory services; and technical experts. Thus, in a real sense, UNECA has been in the forefront of human and institutional capacity building in Africa, long before capacity-building became appreciated, fashionable and topical.

The UNECA Training and Fellowships Programme for Africa came into being in 1965 to assist African governments accelerate the training of manpower for their development endeavour. The Programme identifies and secures training opportunities for Africans in fields that are critical to the development of their countries. It also provides fellowship money and administers and monitors training. In the thirty years of its existence, the Programme has mobilized and awarded fellowships for study in institutions within and outside Africa at under-graduate levels as well as for short and medium length courses. In all, over 2500 fellows have been trained in practically all areas of development. Every member State has benefitted from the Programme. In 1979,

a special component of the Programme was developed to train Namibians in development administration and management skills.

The collection, analysis and dissemination of information has been one of the traditional strengths of UNECA. The Commission assists African countries to establish and/or develop a durable infrastructure for the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of integrated demographic, social, economic and environment statistics; to develop the statistical data required for planning, monitoring and evaluating social and economic development; to provide continuous support for developing national data processing capabilities, especially by enhancing the utilization of micro-computers; and to promote the improvement of the quality, relevance, timeliness and intercountry comparability of data. An important aspect of these activities is improving and harmonizing concepts, definitions and methods, so as to adapt them to the special circumstances of the African region and to ensure a sufficiently large body of standardized statistical material that could be compared at the sub-regional, regional and international levels.

This function has evolved into distinct but interrelated areas. One is the creation by UNECA of the Pan African Development Information System (PADIS), in 1980. PADIS's highly acknowledged achievements include: promotion of information

technology and advancement of development information management in Africa through, in particular, its assistance in the establishment of 38 national centres and three sub-regional centres for organization and management of development information; training of over 1000 persons per year from a total of 37 African countries in PADIS methodologies for the management of development information; creation and maintenance of data bases on economic and social, scientific and technological aspects of African development literature; provision of information to African researchers, planners and policy makers through a pro-active programme of user services and assisting in the establishment of electronic communication and networking in Africa.

The second component of UNECA's support for the development of statistical and information systems relates mainly to revamping and reinforcing the statistical capacities in the region. UNECA's support has included assistance for the implementation of the African Census Programme (ACP) in the 1970s, the National Accounts Capability Programme (NACP) conceived by UNECA in 1978, the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP) in 1973, the Statistical Development Programme for Africa (SDPA) in 1987 and the Addis Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa in the 1990s. UNECA has already developed a strategy for the implementation of the Plan.

The SDPA project was established in 1987 when three separate projects funded by UNDP and executed by ECA were merged. The three components of SDPA were: the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP), the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) and the National Accounts Capability Programme (NACP). The AHSCP is the sequel to the

African Census Programme (ACP) which was established in response to requests from African Governments for technical and financial assistance to carry out censuses in the 1970 round in accordance with United Nations principles and recommendations. AHSCP is intended to provide a flow of demographic, social and economic data from household surveys during the intercensal years. The NACP was conceived by ECA in 1978 as a means of improving basic economic statistics of the African countries and thus leading to more timely and reliable estimation of national accounts aggregates.

SDPA provided short-term teaching assistance to the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) centres, supplied limited equipment, awarded fellowships for the training of trainers and organized workshops and seminars in national accounts, household surveys, training etc. to improve the knowledge and performance of serving statisticians. Under STPA and SDPA projects, a significant number of middle - and professional-level African Statisticians have been trained both for the public and the private sectors in African countries. Most of the fellowships were for Doctorate and M.Phil degrees in Statistics, Economics and Statistical computing.

AHSCP's principal achievement is that countries which have implemented the programme over a reasonable time span have nationals who have developed the capability to deal with all aspects of survey-taking. The AHSCP has also helped to transfer skills from short-term experts and regional and interregional advisers to local persons who are thus able to carry out surveys without undue dependence on external expert assistance.

The NACP was conceived by ECA in 1978 as a means of improving basic economic statistics of the African countries, thus

leading to more timely and reliable national accounts aggregates. A good number of countries have benefited from the programme. Reliable and up-to-date basic economic statistics as well as national accounts are now being produced by those countries. The main problem encountered was insufficiency of funding for the programme.

Apart from the SDPA project, the statistical development activities include the Regional Advisory Service in Demographic Statistics (RASDS) and the Inter-census Training Programme for Sub-saharan Africa. RASDS has assisted African countries in carrying out population and housing censuses and demographic surveys and in establishing reliable civil registration systems and related activities.

The UNECA-Regional Statistical Data Base (UNECA-RSDB) contains historical as well as research data relating to its member States. Over the years, the data has been extended twice and the current version accommodates macro-level annual series from 1970 onwards on: international trade, national accounts, population, labour, education, health, vital statistics, tourism, transport and communications, agriculture, industry, finance and prices for African countries. The primary sources of data for updating ECA- RSDB are the national statistical offices of the member States.

The UNECA library was established soon after the first session of the Commission. After several temporary accommodations, it moved to its present premises, a separate building of the Africa Hall complex, in mid-1977. Established as a special social and economic library to serve the research and information needs of the Secretariat, staff, delegates and observers at UNECA conferences, and seminars and workshops, the library also serves

UN agencies and diplomatic missions stationed in Addis Ababa, research personnel of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), visiting scholars and other researchers from Africa and overseas seeking information on Africa.

Planned as a UN regional library for Africa, it is the single largest collection in the UN system outside the New York, Geneva and Vienna libraries, carrying the most substantial collection on the economies of Africa. With estimated holdings of about 250,000 volumes, excluding mimeographed UN documents, and subscribing to over 300 periodicals and newspapers and receiving an equal number of these through its exchange and gift arrangements with several African and non-African institutions and libraries, the UNECA library constitutes an impressive information resource base to support the research and operational needs of the Commission and its member States.

It is a depository for official government publications from member States and inter-governmental organizations, for World Bank confidential country reports and also for the publications of UN specialized agencies, as well as all UN General Assembly Session Papers. The UNECA library has over the years, matured into an intellectual facility capable of assisting UNECA's role as a think-tank for the African region. Its services are in great demand judging by the large volume of requests made by member States for reference and referral assistance. Plans are afoot to fully automate its services and products so as to provide the necessary material and intellectual inputs to further enhance UNECA's role among its member States.

UNECA has provided training in agricultural economics and acted as a pressure institution whose influence has added an African dimension to the internationally sponsored development

initiatives, programmes and compact. Subregional training seminars have been organized for government officials, on training needs in agricultural development planning and programming (including project execution, monitoring and evaluation), as well as on the establishment and strengthening of agricultural marketing extension services in African countries. Manuals and guidelines have been prepared to assist policy analysts and subject matter specialists to discharge their responsibilities effectively at all levels. Training workshops, study tours, consultancy services and the use of national experts as resource persons have been some of the means used to reach a great number of African agricultural experts. In addition, regular publications, including staff papers and monographs, have been prepared on African agricultural issues to reach a growing number of African and non-African experts.

In the field of energy development, UNECA has also organized a number of training workshops and seminars for African researchers and policy makers. Among those, the most important were workshops on energy planning, energy supply and demand projections and energy management. Recently, a seminar on energy policy and the environment was organized for senior African energy planners.

During the early years of its establishment, particularly in the 1960s, the Commission played an active role in the development of water resources in Africa. The period between 1963 and 1964 witnessed the formation of a number of river and lake basin organizations. The secretariat's role in the preparatory stages of the establishment was undertaking studies and surveys including arranging bilateral assistance. During the mid 1960s and again in the 1980s, UNECA carried out studies in hydrology, planning

and development of the hydrological services in the African region.

Ever since the United Nations Water Conference in 1977, the secretariat has been intensifying its activities in the water resources sector in Africa particularly in those areas that have a regional or sub-regional scope. The activities have included studies on land and water resources for irrigation development, assessment and monitoring of the drinking water supply and sanitation decade programmes (1981-1990), review of the situation with regard to development of water resources in drought stricken countries in Africa, studies on river and lake basin development in Africa, case studies on water supply and sanitation, evaluation of the water situation, assessment of progress and developing strategies for future actions. The outcome of these studies has served to redirect and reorient the policy, planning, development and management of water resources at the national and regional levels in Africa.

In the transboundary river basins, where no formal cooperative mechanisms presently exist, UNECA assists the member States of these basin areas in carrying out dialogue/negotiations in their attempts to set up such mechanisms for cooperation in integrated development of water resources in these basins. UNECA's recent efforts in the Nile, the Zambezi, the Lake Chad and the Niger basin areas are some examples in this area.

The activities of the secretariat in the field of cartography also go back to the inception of the Commission itself. Its purpose was to assist member States in filling the enormous hiatus in surveying and mapping left in Africa after the exodus of the "colonial powers". Of particular significance is the work done in the preparation of the "Cartographic Inventory Atlas for Africa"

project, launched in 1976. The inventory, through systematic research and demanding drafting work that spanned over a decade, collected and portrayed information on 10 themes that were selected, taking into account the requirements of the planning of economic development schemes, particularly with regard to the exploitation of natural resources. Since that time, some ad-hoc up-dating of the index sheets has been carried out whenever new data were available. The Atlas is currently being updated with the use of modern spatial computer technology so as to enhance the utility of its data. The initiation of the second phase, that would yield a digital Atlas, is envisaged in 1995.

Regular publications by the secretariat on subjects related to socio-economic and technological development in Africa have been found to be of immense value by African research, teaching, consultancy and development institutions, especially African universities which lack the foreign exchange to procure teaching materials from international sources. Many of these institutions have written to inform the secretariat of how very useful they have found the publications. Other institutions have expressed the view that the publications provide a useful insight into the process of commercial, economic and scientific integration and cooperation of the nations of Africa.

In its bid to address the continent's food and agriculture problems, UNECA has undertaken a wide array of activities. Studies have been conducted on post-harvest food losses and techniques for preventing or reducing these losses in Africa. These studies have led to a pilot project on the reduction of food losses through insect pest management based on the development of farming systems for the control of pests without the use of pesticides.

Considerable work has been undertaken on conservation, expansion and rational utilization of forestry resources. Activities performed in this domain include evaluation of programmes for the rational utilization of land resources with special emphasis on forests, soil and wild life; combating drought through afforestation and reforestation programmes in arid and semi-arid areas, harmonization and co-ordination of forestry policies; promotion of efficiency in energy utilization; and assessment of the region's institutional, legal and resource framework as a basis for enhancing forestry research and training.

Transport, communications and tourism are areas in which UNECA provides a lot of technical assistance to African countries. In general, experts in air transport, roads and road transport, maritime ports and shipping, railways and multi-modal transport, as well as in communications and tourism, each year provide technical assistance to member States on all aspects of transport, communications and tourism development. In the field of tourism, assistance is aimed at strengthening inter-country networks and on managing tourism infrastructures. In the past, UNECA had assisted the African parks to establish park management associations. Currently, it is working with African countries to carry out institutional reforms.

The poor performance of African economies peaking in the "lost decade" of the 1980s, was due, partly to a number of human resources, management and socio-political issues which had been evident but had received scant attention at the national level. UNECA thus spared no effort, throughout the years, in providing advisory services to requesting member States, and disseminating information through technical publications, seminars, training workshops and other means on matters relating to human resources planning, development and utilisation; the social aspects of

development; and the administrative and management dimensions of the entire development effort.

In this regard, UNECA has tackled many issues ranging from decentralisation of government for the promotion of participatory decision-making and establishment of non-governmental and other self-help organisations, to their empowerment in the socio-economic development process; the installation of modern management techniques in the administration of government affairs and public enterprises; the reform of public sector management including budgetary and taxation systems, policies and administration to make them responsive to changing developing trends and dictating circumstances. Privatisation, a mechanism for the reduction of government control of the economy in a decentralised system and as one way of encouraging the development of indigenous entrepreneurship, has also been encouraged in recent times.

Another major problem in Africa is the shortage of qualified middle- and high-level personnel in scientific, technical and managerial categories. A great number of African countries are affected by the outflow of their meagre skilled human resources to industrialized countries, particularly to Europe and North America. The fall in real earnings, inadequate work facilities and increasing political turmoil and unrest in a large number of the African states have compelled the migrants to sell their knowledge and know-how in other countries where conditions are felt to be much better than what prevails in Africa. The number of qualified African nationals residing and working in western countries is at present quite considerable. Such a heavy outward flow, coupled with the high rate of refusal of overseas graduating students to return, has been a source of concern for many countries.

UNECA has, since 1983, responded to the call to put in place measures for reversing the brain-drain by implementing the Joint ECA/IOM Return of Skills Programme for Africa (RESPA). RESPA aims at reversing the brain-drain through a selective return of skilled African nationals living and working in developed countries. Since it became operational in 1985, it has proved that it has great potentials to contribute to the alleviation of the problems of the brain-drain in Africa. It has managed to return from developed countries to Africa, over one thousand Africans with expertise in skill areas that are of critical shortage in Africa such as engineering, medicine, agriculture, education, management, etc.

Reflecting the need to confront Africa's socio-economic development in an integrated and multidisciplinary perspective, the UNECA established in 1990 the Multi-disciplinary Regional Advisory Group (MRAG). The advisory component of UNECA's programme of technical cooperation, MRAG has professional staff with a wide spectrum of expertise in agriculture, human resources, public administration, management, statistics, regional cooperation and integration, macro-economics, environment and energy management etc. The services of the MRAG are available to member States and African intergovernmental organisations at no cost to them.

Driven by the need to accelerate technical cooperation among African countries and to stature it in a self-reliant context, UNECA requested the UN Secretary-General to establish the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development (UNTFAD) in 1977 with the objective of mobilizing resources for African development. Since its inception, it has mobilized these resources biennially through a Pledging Conference of the ECA Conference of Ministers. In addition to this Pledging Conference, member

States of the United Nations may pledge contributions to it at the Pledging Session of the General Assembly every year.

UNTFAD finances small-scale technical assistance projects, as well as initial phases of major development projects and pilot projects. The Fund also provides seed money to help build up and to mobilize substantial additional resources from foreign donors to launch major programmes on a sustainable basis. Since its inception, UNTFAD has mobilized US\$12.5 million from African governments and external donors, which have been used to generate more than US\$ 100 million from donors and development financing institutions to support national, sub-regional or regional development programmes.

UNTFAD is first and foremost Africa's own initiative, within the context of the United Nations, for mobilizing its own resources for development. It also serves as a framework for cooperation with Africa's partners in the International Community (governments and NGOs) in providing the resources needed for the effective implementation of concrete programmes for the recovery and development of the region.

UNTFAD is operated from two "windows" i.e. "UNTFAD Specific" and "UNTFAD General". The former receives resources pledged by member-States and donors for specific projects while the latter pools unspecified contributions for use in developing

and implementing regional projects and programmes. A report on the status and the use of the resources of the Fund is presented to the ECA Conference of Ministers every two years.

UNTFAD resources have been used in strategic areas that help to break new ground in sub-regional and regional cooperation and integration, promote structural transformation and foster technological change and transformation. In this way, UNTFAD resources have been utilized to create or strengthen common institutions and promote economic cooperation and integration, rural development, food production and agricultural marketing, entrepreneurship and small-scale industries, marine resources, the development of mineral and water resources as well as resources of the sea, nuclear energy development and human resources capacity-building.

The programme priorities for UNTFAD funding in the short-to-medium term are the promotion of Africa's economic and social transformation through regional economic cooperation and integration; the social dimensions of development especially the interrelationship between economic and social factors in the development process; strengthening and developing capacities for socio-economic and human development; promoting popular participation; promoting sustainable development; improving the management and coordination of emergency, humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance.

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## UNECA: Forging Ahead

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UNECA is in the midst of a challenging period in the development history of the region, perhaps the most challenging since its establishment, and a time when the socio-economic situation of the region raises important questions about the capacity of the continent to initiate and sustain the development process. These questions are being raised against the background of the continent's deteriorating social and economic conditions and its bleak prospects given the present trends.

Therefore, as the continent seriously re-examines its economic development policies, strategies and priorities, the role of UNECA has assumed a new, more critical importance and relevance to Africa's development. It is a time for UNECA to ensure the creation of opportunities for meaningful contributions towards enhancing prospects for the region's development by furthering the cause of economic and social advancement.

The need between now and the turn of the century is to find answers to questions as to how to get Africa to shake off once and for all, the scourges of economic stagnation, social decline and marginalization; how to rise to the challenges of entering the twenty-first century as a dynamic region, competitive in the world economy, and with its structural transformation and sustainable development firmly assured.

In order to meet this need, special attention will be accorded to the requisite measures for rapidly establishing the African Economic Community as enunciated in the Abuja Treaty. UNECA, in collaboration with OAU, ADB and other development partners, will need to redouble their efforts to promote and strengthen economic cooperation and integration. To this end, the secretariat will pursue with greater vigour, policies, strategies and measures for strengthening and making more effective, the functioning of the region's development institutions and infrastructures.

Economic co-operation and integration cannot be achieved unless the conditions are created for promoting sectorial integration of the region's economies. This calls for the development and maintenance of reliable networks of agricultural, physical, industrial and institutional infrastructures and for significantly increasing the movement of goods, services and people within the continent. The secretariat will focus on the implementation of the programmes for the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa and the Second Industrial development Decade for Africa.

A closer examination of the factors contributing to economic cooperation and integration; human, institutional and infrastructural capacities ranked high. The Commission's actions

would aim at building effective and efficient critical capacities in the three areas of human resources, institutions and physical infrastructures. The building of African capacity will require total commitment and will in mobilizing the needed resources; both domestic and external. The Commission will, specifically, articulate concrete ways to build, strengthen and fully utilize human, institutional and infrastructural capacities.

The social concerns will not be lost in all of this. The continent will be supported in its determination to address the growing importance of the social dimensions of economic development, especially the need to integrate population factors in development planning and policy making.

Recent developments in the political situation give hope for a greater involvement of the people in deciding their destiny. There is a broad agreement that people are both the objective of, and the most important means to the development and improvement of living standards. This conviction will be supported by an intensification of our commitment to pursue the process of democratization that has already begun.

Furthermore, the problem of poverty will be given high priority. The areas of paramount concern will be food security and self-sufficiency, the use of non-conventional food resources as a means of alleviating food shortages and the promotion of sustainable agricultural development based on sound

environmental management and within the framework of the African Common Position on environment and development.

The region's preoccupation with economic survival, particularly in the light of prevailing civil conflicts and political crisis in some countries; natural disasters, especially drought and desertification; the negative international economic environment which has translated into deteriorating terms of trade and rapidly declining resource flows has signalled the need for anchoring the region's development agenda on sound strategic planning, whose objective is to reduce uncertainties about the future.

In this regard future efforts will aim at developing a central model system which will link together macro-economic models of the countries of the region to be used regularly to forecast the level and geographic distribution of regional activities and intra-African trade and analyze the impact of economic shocks or alternative policy scenarios including those of AAF-SAP, on the regional economy.

Finally, the challenge for UNECA is the intensification of its commitment to work with Africa's development partners, non-governmental organizations and other members of the United Nations system in support of Africa's development, especially in presenting Africa's development messages and taking positions on its behalf.