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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Thirty-first session of the Commission/
twenty-second meeting of the Conference
of Ministers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
6-8 May 1996

**FOLLOW-UP ON RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY
THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION/
TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The thirtieth session of the Conference of Ministers responsible for economic and social development and planning was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 1 to 3 May 1995, under the theme of "Promoting accelerated growth and sustainable development in Africa through the building of critical capacities".
2. The Conference adopted 15 resolutions, a Special Memorandum on the Mid-term Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s and a Declaration on Africa's external debt.
3. The issues requiring follow-up actions from these resolutions fall under three main categories, namely those involving policy actions but no reporting is specifically or immediately needed; those for which the secretariat needs to take initiatives on its own; and those for which the secretariat has been requested to take immediate action and report to the next session of the Commission.
4. The purpose of this report is to apprise the Conference of actions taken by the secretariat towards the follow-up on issues decided by the 1995 Conference of Ministers, which are not otherwise the subject of a separate agenda item for discussion during the present meeting.

II. FOLLOW-UP ON RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution 794 (XXX): Implementation of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community: Harmonization, rationalization and strengthening of regional economic communities

5. The resolution, among other things, called for the conclusion of the drafting of the protocols of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community in good time for submission to the competent Community authorities for consideration. It also called for support for the subregional economic communities.
6. A number of draft protocols have been prepared, namely on:
 - (a) Industry;
 - (b) Rules of origin;
 - (c) Customs cooperation;
 - (d) Relations between the African Economic Community and the regional economic communities;
 - (e) Transport and communications;
 - (f) Free movement and the right of residence and establishment;
 - (g) Science and technology;
 - (h) Harmonization, quality control and measurement systems;
 - (i) Solidarity, Development and Compensation Fund of the African Economic Community;
 - (j) African Union for Compensation, Payments and Monetary Cooperation;

- (k) Transit trade and transit facilities;
 - (l) Removal and/or elimination of customs barriers for certain items intended for trading purposes within the Community;
 - (m) Energy and natural resources;
 - (n) Non-tariff barriers to be eliminated among member States;
 - (o) Simplification and harmonization of commercial formalities and documents;
 - (p) Pan-African Parliament;
 - (q) Trade promotion; and
 - (r) Food and agriculture.
7. Still to be prepared are the following draft protocols on:
- (a) Statutes of the Court of Justice;
 - (b) Environment;
 - (c) Legal status of a community or multinational company;
 - (d) Education, training and culture;
 - (e) Human resources and social affairs;
 - (f) Health and population;
 - (g) General provisions regarding Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland;
 - (h) Special provisions regarding least developed, land-locked, semi-landlocked and island countries;
 - (i) Relations between the Community and African continental organizations, African non-governmental organizations and associations;
 - (j) Relations between the Community and third parties and international organizations; and
 - (k) Relations between member States and third parties and international organizations.

8. A UNDP-funded project to be implemented jointly by ECA and OAU is expected to come on stream soon and will support efforts to finalize the protocols and strengthen the subregional economic communities.

B. Resolution 796 (XXX): Technical cooperation among African countries

9. This resolution requested the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the President of the African Development Bank, as well as the chief executives of the regional economic communities, to conduct a study on technical cooperation among African

countries. It also proposed the inclusion of the issue of technical cooperation among African countries in the agenda of the twenty-second meeting of the Conference of Ministers.

10. The secretariat has not been able to carry out the actions requested in this resolution because of the present financial crisis facing the United Nations. The ECA secretariat will be exploring other options for carrying out the study requested in the resolution during 1996-1997 biennium.

C. Resolution 798 (XXX): Promotion of private investment in Africa

11. In this resolution, ECA, OAU, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), ADB and the World Bank Group were requested to provide African countries with the technical and financial assistance they need to promote private sector and private investment.

12. In the spirit of the resolution, an international conference on reviving private investment in Africa: partnerships for growth and development is scheduled to be held in Accra, Ghana, from 24 to 27 June 1996. Organized by ECA and hosted by the Government of Ghana, the conference has received co-sponsorship from the World Bank, the European Commission, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), China, Japan, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of the United Kingdom.

13. The key emphasis of the conference are three-fold: to promote inter-action among African and foreign private investors; provide a platform for African Governments to outline their policies for creating a friendly investment climate; and organize a forum for exploring investment opportunities in several sectors.

D. Resolution 799 (XXX): Promoting human development in Africa

14. The Conference, while commending the secretariat for its initiative in launching the Human Development in Africa Report, requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to submit a report every two years to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Human Development and its Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Fifteen. The next report is due in 1997.

E. Resolution 801 (XXX): Food security and self-sufficiency in Africa

15. The resolution, among other things, called upon the Executive Secretary of the Commission, in cooperation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization and other relevant United Nations organizations, to evolve a comprehensive strategy that seeks viable economic development and encourages sustainable agriculture and rural development, including, *inter alia*, land-use policies, access to modern inputs, management of natural resources and the environment, issues relating to the rehabilitation of societies, enhanced private sector participation and measures to promote agricultural trade.

16. Since the adoption of that resolution, the secretariat has undertaken a number of activities directly or indirectly related to the theme areas. One of the major activities was the preparation of a report on progress made in the alleviation of poverty in Africa which was submitted to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and the Environment. It provides the broad magnitudes of poverty and highlights the nexus between poverty and the sustainable exploitation of natural resources. To this end, it discusses established criteria for poverty identification and measurement and outlines actions taken by all concerned to alleviate poverty in the region.

17. Another report prepared for the same Conference on the promotion of non-conventional food resources examined the critical food problems facing the region and underscored the contributions made to food security by the rational exploitation of non-conventional food resources.

18. Two other areas in which the secretariat has been active are fisheries resources and rural development. As regards fisheries resources, the secretariat has prepared a technical publication on subregional cooperation for the effective implementation of established exclusive economic fishery zones, which also covers a review of existing fishing arrangements. It was based on the experiences of Madagascar and Mozambique. Some of the crucial techniques for expanding, conserving and effectively utilizing the countries' fish resources in the zones are outlined. In the area of rural development, a training manual has been completed, the objective of which is to improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of alternative delivery systems and implementation processes with a special focus on rural development.

F. Resolution 803 (XXX): Resource mobilization for the implementation of the African Platform for Action

19. In this resolution, the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat was requested to mobilize financial resources for the implementation of the African Platform for Action.

20. In pursuant of the resolution, the following efforts have been made:

(a) A project proposal on "Leadership Fund for African Women" focusing on three critical areas, namely enhancing women's leadership role in the public decision making; economic empowerment of women; and promotion of women's human legal rights was developed and submitted to development partners including the World Bank, which has approved \$1 million for implementation of the project;

(b) Another project proposal on enhancing women management and entrepreneurial skills in selected sub-Saharan African countries has been developed and will be funded by the Government of the Netherlands;

(c) Five other project proposals for funding have been developed and are being submitted to several bilateral agencies for their consideration.

G. Resolution 805 (XXX): Food security and self-sufficiency in North Africa

21. This resolution, among other things, recommended that the food security situation in the North African subregion be reviewed with a view to formulating policies to attain the goal of food security and self-sufficiency.

22. The Tangier MULPOC is implementing this resolution, in collaboration with the ECA Agriculture Division and the possible assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization.

23. In addition, the secretariat has undertaken a study, entitled "Contribution à l'étude de l'impact des accords de l'Uruguay Round sur la libéralisation des échanges extérieurs intermaghrébins". This paper was presented to a workshop on "Libéralisation et financement des échanges maghrébins au service de l'intégration économique maghrébine", held in Tangier from 14 to 16 June 1995. A study is also planned on the impact of the Uruguay Round on trade in food products covering North Africa as well as the other subregions.

H. Resolution 806 (XXX): United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders

24. In this resolution, the Conference appealed to African member States, the Administrator of UNDP and to the United Nations to consider the funding of the operations of the Institute, and requested the Executive Secretary of ECA to follow-up on the implementation of the resolution.

25. In its 1996-1997 programme budget proposals, ECA requested the continuation of the grant under the regular budget allocation. The General Assembly appropriated \$204,800 to the Institute for the 1996-1997 biennium in order to alleviate the financial difficulties being experienced by the Institute.

I. Resolution 808 (XXX): Strengthening the capacity of the Economic Commission of Africa:
United Nations Trust Fund for African Development

25. This resolution requested a review of the operations of the Fund and made some proposals for strengthening them, including the possibility of:

(a) Negotiating a schedule for the phased payment of contributions pledged or their outright cancellation;

(b) Merging the Fund's biennial pledging conferences with the General Pledging Conference of the United Nations organized annually at United Nations Headquarters.

27. Immediately after the twenty-first meeting of the Conference of Ministers, the secretariat requested all African countries having arrears exceeding 15 years to deposit their pledged contribution and/or to confirm when payment would be made. Unfortunately, no replies have been received to date. The secretariat is about to take the necessary actions for the write-off of these contributions.

28. The UNTFAD pledging conference will now be merged with the annual United Nations Pledging Conference for operational activities, effective this year.