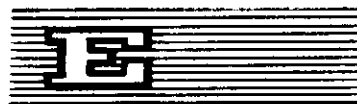




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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Fourth United Nations Regional
Cartographic Conference for Africa
Abidjan, Ivory Coast, 5 - 16 November 1979
Item 5 of provisional agenda

**IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT
THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CARTOGRAPHIC
CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA, HELD IN ADDIS ABABA,
ETHIOPIA, FROM 30 OCTOBER TO 10 NOVEMBER 1972**

Progress report by the secretariat

1. This progress report covers the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa in implementing the resolutions adopted at the third Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 30 October to 10 November 1972. 1/These activities are summarized under the headings of the resolutions which the Commission secretariat was responsible for implementing.

**RESOLUTION 1: FOURTH UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CARTOGRAPHIC
CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA**

2. By virtue of the first resolution adopted at the third United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa was required to convene the fourth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa not later than October/November 1975. As a result of circumstances beyond its control relating in particular to the retirement of the Chief of the Cartography Unit of ECA and the difficulty in recruiting a successor until early May 1976, the secretariat was under staffed. In spite of this, the secretariat attempted on three occasions to convene the conference. The first attempt was made in March 1974 when the Government of the Ivory Coast was contacted to confirm its acceptance of the previous offer to host the Conference and thereafter to suggest convenient dates for convening it at Abidjan. A subsequent attempt was made to hold the Conference in August 1976. Owing to the lack of funds and to late response from the host Government to confirm its previous acceptance of the offer to host it, postponement was inevitable. The secretariat finally worked out the arrangements for convening the Conference with the host Government in April 1979 and the firm dates of 5 - 16 November 1979 were fixed.

1/ See E/CN.14/580 - E/CN.14/CART/349

Letters of invitation to attend the Conference together with the provisional agenda (E/CN.14/CART/360) were sent to Governments of all African countries, associate member States, specialized agencies of the United Nations intergovernmental organizations and other interested Governments in accordance with the procedure followed for the three previous conferences.

RESOLUTION 2: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF CARTOGRAPHERS

It would be recalled that the first United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa held in Nairobi (Kenya) in July 1963 considered Economic and Social Council resolution 600 (XXI) concerning the establishment of cartographic committees by those economic commissions which thought it desirable for the purpose of periodic consultation among their members and recommended the deferment of further consideration of the resolution until the second United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa had studied it in the light of progress made by the secretariat in carrying out certain preliminary work regarding the future of cartographic activities in Africa. At the second Conference, which was held in Tunis (Tunisia) in September 1966, the Conference considered this issue and adopted a resolution expressing the hope that ECA would examine the matter at its next session and study the possibility of taking practical steps to set up a small standing committee under its authority. In June 1975, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa organized a meeting of experts in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) for the purpose of considering and, if agreed, establishing a permanent association of cartographers for the region to promote the co-ordination and development of cartography in general and to foster the establishment of close relationships among its members in matters relating to cartography and of such common services or organs as may be necessary or desirable for the co-ordination, harmonization and development of cartography in the territories of its members. At the end of the meeting, the constitution of the African Association of Cartography was signed on behalf of 14 cartographic services. The constitution entered into force when at least nine national cartographic services had signed it within six months of its provisional application. During this period the secretariat of the Commission provided the necessary secretariat facilities for the newly established association. Thereafter, the ECA secretariat arranged the first meeting of the Council of the African Association of Cartography which took place in Nairobi (Kenya) from 23 to 27 February, 1976. Among important matters discussed at the meeting were the formal adoption of the constitution and offers from members to host the Association's headquarters. The offer of the Government of Algeria was finally accepted and the Association's headquarters was sited at Algiers.

The African Association of Cartography held its second Council meeting in Algiers from 7. to 12 November 1977. The secretariat extended the necessary support to the Association and was represented at the meeting. An important decision taken at the meeting was the call for closer co-operation between the Association and the ECA secretariat. The third meeting of the Council of the Association arranged to take place in Tunis from 24 October to 2 November 1978 was postponed and arrangements were made to hold it simultaneously with the fourth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa. It is regrettable to note however, that the period between the second meeting of the Council of the Association and the fourth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa recorded few contacts between the two secretariats, a situation which was not in accord with the appeal for closer co-operation.

In June 1970 the ECA secretariat received a request from the Association for the establishment of a cartographic centre in the Congo for training in geodesy, topographical surveying, draughtsmanship and map reproduction. This request is receiving the attention of the secretariat.

The situation regarding the lack of contact between the AAC secretariat and the secretariat of the Commission should be ameliorated to give way to healthier relations which would augur well for the future of the Association. The importance of the co-operative attitudes expected of the two secretariats, working hand-in-hand, and jointly tackling Africa's present incapacities in the field of cartographic disciplines to tap its resources for the common good of its diverse communities hardly needs stressing. The secretariat looks forward to the AAC secretariat's moves in this direction.

RESOLUTION 3: PROMOTION OF INTEREST IN CARTOGRAPHIC WORK

The third United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa in its resolution 3 recommended that ECA should encourage discussion between planners and cartographers in the form of a seminar on the development and exploitation of resources in Africa. Attempts were made to look for financial resources in order to arrange such a seminar. It was decided to initiate a project submission to solicit technical assistance for funding a study tour in a developed country where a number of selected planners and cartographers at the administrative level would have the opportunity of being briefed on the key role played by cartography in planning the host country's social and economic development.

Unfortunately the attempts made so far to identify a donor have been unsuccessful.

RESOLUTION 5: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This resolution has been taken care of by including in the provisional agenda of the present conference an item on technical assistance (see item 7)

RESOLUTION 6: TRAINING CENTRE AT ILE,IFE, NIGERIA

The Regional Centre for Training in Aerial Surveys at Ile,Ife,Nigeria was officially opened in October 1972. To date there are only four countries of the West-African subregion which are participating members of the Centre namely; Benin, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. On account of this poor participation of member States, the third Conference recommended in resolution 5 that information about the training Centre should be made available so that more ECA member States could participate.

In this connexion, ECA used various media to inform the remaining African Governments of the existence of the Training Centre in Aerial Surveys at Ile, Ife, Nigeria. Apart from the brochures of the Centre which were distributed to training institutions and survey organizations within Africa, ECA took advantage of its attendance at the CAU/STRC intra-African Symposium on Manpower Requirement and Development of Cartographic Services in Africa, held in Cairo in 1974 to publicize further the existence of the Centre. At this symposium, ECA presented a paper which gave a wealth of information not only on the background of the Centre but also on its development position at that time and appealed for more participation. CAU recognised the importance of the Centre and

joined ECA to call on all African Governments to participate actively and make use of the facilities at the Centre which were then underutilized. Mention should also be made of the information given regularly in ECA's annual reports since 1972. It will be remembered also that the succeeding work programmes of ECA are looked into by various committees and councils composed of representatives of African Governments at which all projects, including information on the Centre, are described in full.

Special missions for the purpose of urging more participation in the Centre were made to a number of African countries particularly within the West Africa sub-region. The first of such missions took place in 1973 and the second one took place in the first quarter of 1976. Soon after the latter mission, ECA addressed an appeal for participation in the Regional Centre for Training in Aerial Surveys at Ile Ife, Nigeria to all African countries and particularly the ECOWAS countries in a paper (ECA/MULPOC/HIAWEEY/9) which was submitted to the ECA/MULPOC Council of Ministers Inaugural Meeting held in June 1976 at Hiawee.

Regarding the recommendation contained in paragraph 2 to seek more assistance from United Nations agencies as well as securing financial support through multilateral and bilateral means until the Centre becomes fully operative, unfortunately because of financial constraints within the United Nations system in general, the anticipated assistance from UNDP could not be obtained. However, ECA approached the Government of Nigeria as (host Government) for assistance for the Centre and the response was very commendable. This regional project serves not only participating member States but also as many as 13 other countries of Africa. ECA has continued to obtain technical assistance on behalf of the Centre. With the generosity of the Governments of Canada, the Netherlands, Finland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom and the active participation by members of the Centre, the Centre is now fully operational.

RESOLUTION 7: TRAINING OF PERSONNEL

This resolution contains three recommendations. The first concerns the inclusion of an item on training in the agenda of future conferences and has already been catered for in the present conference (See item 6).

In the second part, the ECA secretariat was to make available to member States any papers on the equivalences of educational and training standards in different countries, particularly in Africa. However since the retirement of the former Chief of the Cartography Unit in June 1976 and until the recruitment of a successor in May 1977, the secretariat worked at minimum staff strength. This situation necessitated a reordering of the priorities of the secretariat's cartographic projects to conform with the staff strength. Recognizing the amount of work involved in collecting data, treating and disseminating the resultant information on equivalences of educational and training standards in different countries, the secretariat decided to prepare the implementation of this part of the resolution until it had the requisite capability.

Towards the implementation of the third recommendation, the secretariat, in its programme of work and priorities for 1976-1977, included a study for the purpose of establishing equivalences in standards of entry to training courses in surveying and mapping. This step was aimed at the subsequent establishment of a common nomenclature for subtechnical, technical, professional and academic levels in the various fields of cartography. A project submission for technical assistance

to implement this project was prepared by the secretariat in 1974 and 1976 but regrettably, owing to lack of response, implementation could not commence. Nevertheless, the secretariat continues to rate these projects high among those to be executed in its future programme of work.

In implementing resolution 5 concerning the dissemination of information on the training facilities available at the Regional Centre for Training in Aerial Surveys, Ile-Ife (Nigeria) to all African countries at the AULPCC/Haney meeting in June 1970, the secretariat was able to disseminate the only information at its disposal. It is to be noted therefore that member States and other interested countries responsible for running courses in surveying and mapping did not respond to the invitation that they should make available to the ECA information on the training courses run by them. The secretariat is always prepared and willing to furnish every information at its disposal which is considered of benefit to all African countries.

RESOLUTION 3: CONNEXION OF GEODETIC NETWORKS

As its second session, the Second United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa in Tunis 1966, adopted the following resolution; 2/

"That African countries encourage and support the use of satellites for geodetic observations aimed at establishing a common geodetic datum for Africa" and

"That countries participating in making geodetic ties between geodetic satellite observation stations and their local control authorize release of the resultant data to the international scientific community for the determination of the true size and shape of the earth".

The third United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa held in Addis Ababa in 1972 3/endorsed this resolution and further recommended as follows:

"That all African countries should encourage and support operations leading to the linking of the geodetic networks in Africa"

"That countries outside Africa with capacity for geodetic observations should be invited to co-operate where possible with the African countries concerned in executing this task".

In resolution 6, the Conference invited "the International Association of Geodesy and the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics to co-operate with the Economic Commission for Africa and national cartographic establishments in promoting interest in geodesy in Africa".

In pursuance of this resolution, the International Association of Geodesy invited the ECA secretariat to participate at its first Symposium on Geodesy in Africa held in Khartoum (The Sudan) from 13 to 20 January 1974. Ten resolutions were adopted; one of these called for the creation of a Commission for Geodesy in Africa and enjoined ECA to co-operate with the Commission. Since May 1970, there have been contacts, although spasmodic with the Commission for Geodesy in Africa on matters of mutual interest. Many more of such contacts will be necessary, in the immediate future, to plan effective strategies that will promote the lasting interests of African countries in geodesy.

In November 1972 the secretariat participated in the Seminar on Land Administration and the Development of African Resources, organized by Commonwealth Association of Surveyors and Land Economists held and in Ibadan (Nigeria). It was established, among others, that the lack of up-to-date maps was inhibiting the judicious study, exploration and exploitation of the bountiful natural resources of the continent. The inadequacy of maps was traced to scanty geodetic control networks which are basic to production of good quality maps.

The secretariat participated in a symposium on geodesy, sponsored jointly by the International Association of Geodesy and the Canadian Government in New Brunswick (Canada) from 20 to

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, and the International Association of Geodesy extended an invitation to the secretariat to participate in the International Gravity Workshop 1970 which took place in Nairobi (Kenya) from 20 November to 2 December 1970. The secretariat was represented by the Chief of the Cartography Unit.

At the end of the workshop, 14 resolutions were adopted, two of which required action by the secretariat. The secretariat was requested to:

- (a) approach the Italian Government for necessary financial assistance that would enable the Istituto di Metrologia "G. Colonnetti" of Turin to undertake the establishment of the absolute gravity stations and,
- (b) take necessary action to ensure the continuous up-dating of the cartographic inventory for Africa.

The workshop, which was a tremendous success, provided the right atmosphere for discussions, on a global level, the needs of Africa for geophysical, geodetic and gravity data for meaningful studies, planning and exploitation of its natural resources.

Work on the compilation of the cartographic inventory for Africa is progressing satisfactorily (See E/CH.14/CART/364). Action is also being pursued with the Italian Government on the request for financial assistance which would enable the Istituto di Metrologia G. Colonnetti" of Turin to undertake the establishment of the absolute gravity stations in Africa.

The secretariat has continued to show keen interest in the contribution of these international establishments to the furtherance of knowledge in geodesy, through its participation in the various seminars and symposia, with a view to equipping itself with modern techniques in geodesy for mapping, within the reach of the national cartographic services of its member States, in readiness to render assistance in the strengthening and development of their cartographic services.