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T R A N S P O R T

Machinery for the Co-ordination of Transport

Policies and Planning in the West African Sub-Region

(Note: This paper is to be read in conjunction with
document E/CN.14/INR/118)

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TRANSPORT

Machinery for the Co-ordination of Transport Policies and Planning in the West African Sub-Region.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Efficient and economical transport is essential for the expansion of industrialization, the development of agriculture and of transit and intra-regional trade, and for accelerating economic and social progress. The sub-region's transport system, however, is not well developed and co-ordinated and the transport services are often unsatisfactory. To improve this situation, it is considered essential to set up some form of sub-regional body to examine the problems of transport that are common to the sub-region, to propose their solutions, and to promote the development of integrated transport systems in the sub-region.

2. The secretariat, recognizing that the co-ordination of individual national transport systems and, therefore, of transport development programmes, is essential to the acceleration of economic development in the sub-region and convinced that harmonious development requires a planned approach, sent a two-man mission to visit the fourteen countries of the sub-region in March-April, 1966 with the purpose of studying the practicability of establishing inter-governmental machinery for the co-ordination of transport on a sub-regional basis.

3. The aim of the transport mission was two-fold: (i) to discuss this proposition with the government officials and seek their views on the proposed establishment of inter-governmental machinery for the co-ordination of transport on a sub-regional basis; and (ii) to press the governments to come prepared to the Niamey Sub-regional Meeting on Economic Co-operation in West Africa to be held in October 1966, so that, at this meeting, inter-governmental machinery that will operate in a practical way can be set up.

4. A separate paper, E/CN.14/INR/118, discusses the general findings of the mission, which were results of fruitful discussions held between the members of the mission and government officials. This paper deals separately with the machinery which it is proposed should be set up for

the co-ordination of transport policies and planning in the West African Sub-region.

B. OBJECTIVES

5. The proposed inter-governmental machinery for the co-ordination of planning and operation of transport on a sub-regional basis will deal, on the basis of concrete realities, with the five modes of transport: (1) Air transport, (2) Maritime transport, (3) Rail transport, (4) Road transport, and (5) Inland Water transport.

6. The machinery will operate in a practical way and the problems for which it will have to find concrete solutions may include the following:

7. Air Transport: The most important items that need to be tackled by the machinery may include:

- (i) The establishment of a multi-national sub-regional African airline;
- (ii) Standardization of equipment;
- (iii) The establishment of central engineering base or bases in the sub-region to undertake such work as aircraft and engine overhauls;
- (iv) The establishment of a common Technical Service Centre capable of undertaking the provision of services (air worthiness of the aircraft, licencing of personnel, maintenance of flight standards, accident investigations, etc.) which the governments might find difficult to provide individually due to shortage of skilled personnel and funds;
- (v) The establishment of facilities in the sub-region to train personnel in all categories and fields of aviation.

8. Maritime Transport: The most important items that need to be tackled may include:

- (i) Joint operation of shipping lines with a view to forming a sub-regional African Shipping Company;
- (ii) The simplification of administrative formalities in the sub-region;

(iii) The establishment of facilities in the sub-region to train personnel in certain categories of maritime functions including port management.

(iv) Improvement of port facilities including access to ports.

(v) Adherence to the Convention on the Transit Trade of Land-locked countries adopted at the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries held in New York in July 1965.

9. Rail Transport: In order to improve the serviceability of the railways network in the sub-region, items for study may include:

(i) Proposal for practical steps to minimize existing differences in technical specifications;

(ii) The establishment of an African Railway Congress of railway officials based on the existing "African and Malagasy Railway Technicians Conference";

(iii) The establishment of facilities in the sub-region to train personnel in all categories and fields of rail transport;

(iv) The simplification of formalities at frontier posts.

10. Road Transport: Items upon which sub-regional action is urgently required may include:

(i) The designation of an international road network for the sub-region;

(ii) The compilation of priorities for highway construction and rehabilitation on the basis of the needs of the sub-region;

(iii) The adoption of minimum standards for international roads and bridges in the sub-region;

(iv) The preparation of a manual, "Specifications for the Construction of Roads and Bridges";

(v) The adoption of the revised United Nations Convention on Road Traffic and of the Protocol of Road Signs and Signals;

(vi) Standardization of the right-hand rule of the road.

(vii) The standardization of national driving licences in all countries to facilitate the easy flow of road traffic between the countries of the sub-region;

(viii) The simplification of formalities at frontier posts;

- (ix) The training of highway personnel;
- (x) The establishment of a Road Research Centre for the Sub-region;
- (xi) The establishment of a "Roads Congress" of highway engineers on a Pan-African or Sub-regional basis.
- (xii) Standardization of road and road traffic statistics.

11. Inland Water Transport: In order to enable the countries of the sub-region to make sufficient use of their inland waterways, the items for harmonization by the proposed machinery may include:

- (i) Simplification of administrative formalities;
- (ii) The training of qualified operating personnel;
- (iii) The types and sizes of crafts.

C. STRUCTURE

12. It is recommended that inter-governmental machinery for co-ordinating transport in the West African sub-region should be constituted as follows:

- (a) West African Transport Co-ordinating Committee;
- (b) Sub-committees for different modes of transport.

13. West African Transport Co-ordinating Committee: This will be composed of the appropriate minister or equivalent senior official from each member country. Ideally, it will be able to commit member governments to programmes of action subject to ratification by the governments concerned. It will consist of 14 members.

14. The Chairman and the Secretary of the Co-ordinating Committee will be elected by simple majority.

15. The Chairman of the Sub-committee that deals with the mode of transport under consideration will be ex officio Joint Secretary of the Co-ordinating Committee for that subject.

16. The terms of office of the Chairman and the Secretaries of the Co-ordinating Committee will be decided by the Committee.

17. The Co-ordinating Committee will work by correspondence and by meeting annually.

18. Sub-Committees: Each mode of transport will have one working Sub-committee and will be designated as follows:

- (i) Air Transport Sub-Committee;
- (ii) Maritime Transport Sub-Committee;
- (iii) Rail Transport Sub-Committee;
- (iv) Road Transport Sub-Committee; and
- (v) Inland Water Transport Sub-Committee (Technical Aspects).

19. These Sub-Committees, which will be nominated by the Co-ordinating Committee, will be composed of technical representatives (chief engineers, managers, etc.) of the national departments responsible for the transport mode in question who will be nominated by their government.

20. The size of each Sub-Committee will vary depending on the number of countries that use the mode of transport under consideration.

21. Under special circumstances, working parties may be appointed by each Sub-Committee to study special problems.

22. Each Sub-Committee will elect its Chairman and Secretary and will work by correspondence and by meeting as often as desirable.

23. The terms of the Chairman and the Secretary will be determined by the Sub-Committee depending on the type and magnitude of the work to be done.

