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REPORT OF THE MEETING ON FEEDER LINKS TO
THE TRANSAFRICAN HIGHWAY
Addis Ababa 12-15 September 1972

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Introduction

1. The meeting on feeder links to the Transafrican Highway was held at Addis Ababa from 12 to 14 September 1972.

Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia. The following countries were also invited, but did not attend:
Congo (PR), Gabon, Niger and Somalia.

Opening of meeting

3. Mr. Mamadou Aw, Special Adviser to the Executive Secretary, welcomed the participants on behalf of Mr. Robert Gardiner, Executive Secretary, who was unable to attend. In his opening statement he stressed the importance of the meeting, for it afforded an opportunity for bilateral discussions about the feeder links to the TAH.

Election of officers

4. The following representatives were elected as officers of the meeting:

Mr. Brahim Mahamat (Chad), Chairman
Mr. Shifarrow Bizuneh (Ethiopia), Vice-Chairman

The meeting agreed that the Transafrican Highway Bureau should serve as the Rapporteur.

Organization of the meeting

5. The following working hours were adopted:

10:00 -- 1:00 p.m.
3:30 -- 6:00 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

6. After discussions, the following agenda was adopted:

- (1) Opening of meeting
- (2) Election of officers
- (3) Organization of the meeting
- (4) Adoption of the agenda
- (5) Papers by the Transafrican Highway Bureau
- (6) Discussion
- (7) Other business
- (8) Adoption of the report

Papers by the Transafrican Highway Bureau

7. The representative of the secretariat explained that in compliance with the decision of the Commission which was adopted as ECA Resolution 226(X) at the First Conference of Ministers at Tunis in February 1971, the Transafrican Highway would pass through the following six countries: Kenya, Uganda, Zaire, Central African Republic, Cameroon and Nigeria.

8. The first meeting of the TAH Co-ordinating Committee, which is composed of high-level representatives from each of the six countries concerned, was organized in June 1971. The Executive Secretary of ECA was a member of the Committee. The World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Development Fund, as well as the industrialized countries who had shown interest in the project and who were ready to provide financial and technical assistance, were associate members of the Committee. The Co-ordinating Committee promoted and co-ordinated the planning and implementation of the Transafrican Highway.

9. In view of the importance of the project, a Transafrican Highway Bureau had been established to serve as Secretariat of the Committee and is responsible for the organization of meetings and the execution of directives given to it by the Co-ordinating Committee.

10. It was pointed out that the TAH project from Mombasa to Lagos was of interest to other countries besides the six through whose territories the route passed. The neighbouring States, especially the land-locked ones, would find it to their advantage to have their road networks linked with the TAH.

11. The following States would be parties to an extended project of the TAH network: Tanzania, Somalia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, the People's Republic of the Congo, Chad, Niger, Zambia and Gabon. Zambia and Gabon, however, are somewhat remote from the lay-out of the Mombasa-Lagos route. A study of possible ways of linking them up with the Highway should be undertaken. As far as Zambia was concerned, this would cover connection with the Tanzanian road network and in the case of Gabon, the Cameroon road network.

12. It was decided to carry out the Transafrican Highway project in two stages. In the first stage, the study of the main highway from Mombasa to Lagos would be carried out through the agencies for co-operation which have already been established for the purpose (the Co-ordinating Committee and the TAH Bureau). Once the broad outlines of the project had been decided upon, the second stage would consist of having the countries concerned in the various sub-regions associated with the project so that it would be enlarged to form a true trans-African road network. It was stressed that the two stages should not be entirely separate, and studies affecting them both might be undertaken concomitantly by the TAH Bureau.

13. The meeting was informed that at the second meeting of the TAH Co-ordinating Committee held at Bangui in April 1972, the alignment of the Transafrican Highway and the study programme to be undertaken, which included the study of feeder links from the neighbouring States to the TAH, were adopted.

14. The TAH Bureau presented one main document: Feeder Links to the Trans-african Highway (E/CN.14/TRANS/68). The ECA representative indicated that this paper was prepared on the basis of the information available at the secretariat and requested participants to comment on the suitability of the recommended feeder links to the TAH and also to provide the TAH Bureau with additional information about the proposed links.

Statements by the neighbouring countries

Chad:

15. The delegation of the Republic of Chad thanked the ECA secretariat for the invitation extended to its Government to participate in the meeting.

16. The Government of the Republic of Chad noted that, according to the official document presented by the secretariat, the alignment of the Trans-African Highway seemed to have been definitely decided; the Highway was to cross six semi-forested African countries of which only two were land-locked, and none of which was among the 25 countries in the category of the least developed of the developing countries. Chad, however, was one of these.

17. The Chad delegation drew attention to the economic situation of their country, a situation which was resulted mainly from its geographical situation as a semi-desert land-locked country, and one of the least developed among the developing countries, and noting the resolutions adopted both by the United Nations in the strategy for the Second Development Decade and by the ECA Conference of Ministers in February 1971 at Tunis, urgently requested all organizations and donor countries, and all the African countries which were directly or indirectly concerned with the Trans-African Highway to reconsider the alignment of this Highway with regard to Chad.

18. It was Chad's hope that, once the Highway reached Damara (Central African Republic), a branch road would be constructed through the Central African Republic as far as Sido and from there to Sarh, Koumra, Doba, Moundou (Chad), N'Gaoundéré, and Banyo, (Federal Republic of Cameroon).

19. The Chad delegation stated that this road could be used the year round as a result of the assistance of the European Development Fund, which had recently granted additional funds for the construction of a section of road linking Moundou (Chad) and N'Gaoundéré (Cameroon).

20. With respect to the roads to link up with the Trans-African Highway, the Chad Government proposed the following routes:

- (1) Fort-Lamy - Guelendeng - Bousso - Sarh - (548 km);
- (2) Fort-Lamy - Guelendeng - Bongor - Lai - Doba - Goré - Bossembélé - Bangui, (1,146 km - 605 km in Chad);
- (3) Sarh - Am - Timan - Abeche - Adre.

Burundi:

21. Having thanked the secretariat for inviting his country to this meeting, the representative of Burundi informed the meeting that his Government had agreed to link up his country with the Trans-African Highway, as proposed in document E/CN.14/TRANS/68. He also informed the meeting that work on the construction of the Bujumbura road to Kigali was to commence in January 1973.

22. The delegate then asked that the neighbouring countries, i.e., those whose networks were to be linked up with the Trans-African Highway, be invited to attend meetings of the co-ordinating committee as observers in order to be able to safeguard their interests. He also asked to be informed of the findings of the mission which the secretariat had carried out in Uganda and Zaïre, concerning the reservations which these countries had expressed on the route adopted during the meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee at Bangui.

Rwanda:

23. The representative of Rwanda stated that his country was in favour of the itinerary proposed in document E/CN.14/TRANS/68, namely: Kigali-Kayonza - Kagitumba - Mbarara, which constituted an extension of the road linking Rwanda and Burundi financed by the EDF for which the preliminary studies were nearing completion, and work on which was to commence in the next few months.

24. The delegate also stated that his country would like to have other roads, linking Rwanda with neighbouring countries, considered part of the future Trans-African Highway network. These roads would be:

- (i) to the west or Zaire:
the Kigali Butare - Cyangugu - Bukavu - Kisangani road and the Kigali - Rubengeri - Gsenyi - Goma - Beni - Kisangani road;
- (ii) to the east or Tanzania:
the Kigali - Kayonza - Kibungo - Rusumo - Mwanza - Arusha road.

Ethiopia:

25. The representative of Ethiopia stated that the recommended feeder link, Addis Ababa-Moyale-Nairobi, was exactly what his Government proposed. He said that the section from Addis Ababa to Dilla was of all-weather standard and the portion from Dilla to Moyale was currently under construction and was expected to be completed in 1975.

26. He further pointed out that since the Kenya section of the proposed feeder link was expected to be completed in 1973, the Ethiopian Government planned to have an alternate route from Moyale through Kibre Mengiste to Addis Ababa until the completion of the Moyale-Dilla section.

Tanzania:

27. The representative of Tanzania stated that he did not have a mandate to say whether the recommended feeder link from Tanzania to the TAH would be accepted or not to his Government.

Sudan:

28. The representative of the Sudan stated that of the two possible feeder links recommended in document E/CN.14/TRANS/68 his Government favoured the Khartoum - Wadi Medani - Malakal - Juba - Gulu - Kampala, because this was shorter and less expensive to construct.

29. He informed the meeting that the Khartoum - Wad. Medani (186 km) section was asphalted. From Wad. Medani to Kosti (229 km) the engineering design had been completed and high priority was being given to the asphaltting of this section. From Kosti to Juba (1,100 kms) funds for its improvement or reconstruction had to be found. He further pointed out that this section passed through a swampy area which lacked suitable road building materials. He added that the Juba-Gulu section was an all-weather road and the Gulu - Kampala section was asphalted.

30. The Sudanese representative also mentioned the following as possible feeder links to the TAH through neighbouring countries of Ethiopia and Chad:

- i) Khartoum - Wad Medani - Gedarif - Gellabat - Metemma - Addis Ababa - Nairobi.

The construction of the Khartoum-Wad Medani section had been completed. The preparation for the construction of the Wad Medani - Gedarif (235 km) was in hand. From Gedarif to Gellabat (155 km) the engineering design had been completed and funds for its construction were being sought.

- ii) Nyala - Zalingei - Geneina - Adré - Abeche.

The engineering design for the Nyala - Zalingei (210 km) section had been completed and high priority was being given to its construction.

31. As far as the additional proposed links were concerned, they were supported by the delegates of Chad and Ethiopia.

Secretariat:

32. The representative of the secretariat thanked the delegates for their statements and made the following replies to the questions raised.

33. The secretariat considered the arguments advanced by Chad with regard to the need to provide Chad with reliable road links and also with regard to economic considerations to be very pertinent and endorsed them. He said that he felt that the linking of the Chad network with the Trans-African Highway by the two routes to the Central African Republic and the Cameroon was possible within the framework of the studies currently being carried out. He stated that the Trans-African Highway would consist not merely of one road, but of a system of roads, and that it was for reasons of methodology that it had been necessary to decide first on the route for one highway before embarking on the study of branch roads. The Sarh - Koumra - Doba - Moundou - N'Goundéré road could therefore subsequently be considered as a branch road of the Trans-African Highway. The secretariat would incorporate the other itineraries proposed into its programme of work.

34. Burundi's request that the neighbouring countries be associated with the work of the Co-ordinating Committee, which was supported by all delegations, would be submitted to the Committee. The secretariat could foresee no difficulty, as these countries had always been kept fully informed since the beginning of the project. The association of the neighbouring countries in the work of the Committee could be beneficial for the project provided that the previous decisions of the Committee were not called into question during the forthcoming meetings.

35. With respect to the reservations expressed by certain countries during the Bangui meeting, a mission had visited the countries concerned and an agreement had been reached concerning the routing of the highway to Kasindi between Uganda and Zaire. Between this point and Kampala, the highway would pass through Fort-Portal. Uganda therefore agreed that the highway need not pass through the northern parts of her territory.

36. As a result of this slight modification, the road to Burundi and Rwanda would pass through Bujumbura - Kigali - Mbarara, and from Mbarara onwards there would be two links: Mbarara - Kampala and Mbarara - Kasindi.

37. Replying to other questions, the secretariat's representative stated that the secretariat accorded equal importance to all sections of the network, whether they were parts of the highway itself or of the feeder roads, and that, consequently, the need for assistance with regard to these feeder roads would also be considered at the meeting to be held in October between the Bureau, the industrialized countries and the financing organizations. Priority studies would depend essentially on the decisions taken by these countries and organizations.

38. The countries present at the meeting could help in this by providing the Bureau with as much information as possible on their programmes, so that it would be possible to make a rapid appraisal of needs.

Adoption of the report

39. The report was adopted by the meeting on 14 September 1972.