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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Eleventh Session;

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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS

238(XI). Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade,

Considering Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s adopted in Tunis in 1971,

Taking note of the report of the fourth session of the Conference of African Planners,

Taking further note of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1621(LI) and 1626(LI) on the arrangements for the review and appraisal of progress during the Second United Nations Development Decade,

1. Requests the Executive Secretary to work out the appropriate method to be used in the evaluation and appraisal of intra-as well as extra-African factors affecting the progress made during the Second United Nations Development Decade;

2. Decides to complement Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s, as embodied in Commission resolution 218(X) of 13 February 1971, by including the following sections more specifically related to transport, communications, science and technology and natural resources:

Natural Resources

Minerals

(1) An appropriate strategy during the 1970s in respect of the exploration, exploitation and utilization of mineral resources should consist of:

- (i) The conduct of a mineral development policy so as to ensure maximum benefits to the national economies from the exploitation and use of mineral resources. In particular, the establishment of forward and backward national industrial links to the mining industry should be firmly promoted;
- (ii) The strengthening of Governments' capabilities to negotiate advantageously contracts in respect of the exploration and exploitation of mineral resources. The participation of Governments in the mining and petroleum industry should be increased with a view to eventual control and direct exploitation. Adequate support should be made available by the necessary research and development institutes;
- (iii) The vigorous promotion of mineral surveys in order to arrive at a better picture of the continent's mineral resources;
- (iv) The training of adequate numbers of specialists needed in mineral exploration and exploitation, with a view to increasing the active participation of African nationals in these activities;
- (v) The fostering of close co-operation between neighbouring countries in respect of mining legislation, and the exchange of geological and technical information for the development of these resources. This is essential especially where mineral deposits or oil-bearing formations spread across national borders;
- (vi) Condemning the exploitation of non-renewable natural resources, mainly minerals and oil, in the occupied territories of the region, with full acknowledgement of the paramount harmful effect on the economy of such territories and of the loss of access of their people to their natural resources, adequate steps should be taken to safeguard their interests including among other policies, the adoption of a non-trading policy in these identified minerals with non-African States.

(2) During the period 1960-1969 the value of the exports of minerals, excluding petroleum rose from 1,126 million dollars to 2,257 million dollars. In the same period the value of exported crude oil and petroleum products rose to over 3,400 million dollars. The region has abundant mineral resources and accounts for about 28 per cent of the total value of world mineral output. For developing Africa as a whole, minerals provide more than a half of the total export earnings, oil and oil products having a share of about 30 per cent, and the other minerals account for over 20 per cent. Besides earning large amounts of foreign exchange, minerals also provide a high proportion of government revenue in many countries.

(3) There can be little doubt that world demand for almost all minerals will continue to grow in the foreseeable future. To increase or even to maintain Africa's share in the world export of minerals, vigorous programmes of mineral survey aimed at identifying exploitable quantities of commercial minerals need to be undertaken. Where prospects for mineral discoveries do exist, adequately staffed and equipped government departments charged with geological surveys should be built up and maintained.

(4) While large-scale mining operations contribute considerably to foreign exchange earnings and to government revenue, the benefit to a nation of mineral exploitation could in many cases be increased by the steadfast promotion of industries which deliver goods to the mining enterprises or which process partly or wholly the ore output. Mining operations could employ labour intensive methods - in respect of certain minerals at least - in order to have some impact on the employment situation. In short, Governments need to conduct such mineral development policies as would ensure maximum economic benefit to the national economies.

(5) With few exceptions, large-scale industrial mining operations in Africa have been conducted by foreign enterprises. Heavy capital input necessary for such operations have so far prevented any substantial changes in the situation. But even where large-scale mining operations have been nationalized, foreigners are frequently still used for the management of such undertakings. The lack of sufficient numbers of skilled and specialized manpower in the management and technical fields must be overcome if African countries are to have real national mining industries. A well-planned all African action for the training of a highly skilled technical and managerial body of professionals in the various aspects of mining should be undertaken most urgently. Such a body is, in particular, needed to strengthen the Governments capability to negotiate with potential investors in the mining field, to oversee the correct execution of concession contracts and to implement mining legislation. In addition, resources should be pooled to establish centres on subregional basis for undertaking research in such fields as mineral economics, ore-dressing technology, etc., to back stop African mining undertakings.

(6) There is need for serious technical and economic studies in respect of the upgrading and transformation of minerals in Africa. Such studies should be developed in three directions:

- (i) Purely export oriented operations;
- (ii) Operations aimed at satisfying domestic or regional demand, the viability of which depends on simultaneous overseas export;
- (iii) Domestic market-oriented operations which are in need of new technological concepts in view of the scale of markets.

Energy

(7) The elements of the strategy in respect of energy include:

- (i) Systematic planning of the development of the different energy resources in Africa;
- (ii) International co-operation in the exploitation of energy resources, including the inter-connexion of national electric energy grids;
- (iii) The promotion of electric energy use in rural areas;
- (iv) Exploration of ways to utilize efficiently non-conventional energy resources such as solar energy and geo-thermal energy.

(8) Africa has very large potential hydro-electric energy resources of which only a minor part is developed. In addition the number of countries where oil is found is steadily increasing. Particular attention needs to be given to the projections of electric energy demand as one input for determining the most economic way of electricity production, taking into account expected future prices of oil and petroleum products and, at the same time, the possibilities of exchange of electric energy between neighbouring countries. In view of the latter there is obviously need to consider energy demand and potential energy production on a subregional basis.

(9) The supply of electric energy to rural areas is lagging behind supply to the cities. As part of the measures to be taken to arrive at a transformation of the rural communities, the use of electricity in rural areas should be actively promoted.

(10) Non-conventional energy resources are receiving increasing attention. Large parts of the African continent receive abundant solar energy and more research into its practical and economical conversion into electrical energy needs to be undertaken. This appears a suitable subject for inter-African co-operation. In very recent years it has been shown that eastern Africa, in particular is rich in geo-thermal resources. Surveys and research with a view to exploiting these resources need to be actively pursued.

Water Resources

(11) A strategy for the further development of Africa's water resources during the 1970s should consist of the following elements:

- (i) The intensive systematic collection, processing, and analysis of adequate hydrological and other data;
- (ii) Up-to-date water legislation and administration and, where not yet in existence, the setting-up of intra-governmental machinery for the co-ordination of water resources development activities and programming;
- (iii) The promotion of the development of international river basins through co-operation by the riparian States;
- (iv) Undertaking of more extensive programmes of water supply in both urban and rural areas.

(12) While over the last decade knowledge of Africa's water resources has, no doubt, increased, the collection of water data in many countries is still insufficient for comprehensive water development. A few countries have made efforts to embark upon the design and operation of a national hydrometeorological network based on both the natural conditions and their economic development programmes, but in many countries a more systematic approach to the collection of water data is now called for.

(13) To be effective, all water development projects must involve a number of government ministries or agencies, with responsibility for specific aspects of government policy, planning and implementation of projects. In many countries, adequate machinery does not exist for the necessary consulta-

tions among agencies in this regard and for the co-ordination of their action. In order to improve the preparation, the selection, and the operation of water resource projects, high priority should be given to the setting up of such machinery. Similarly, water legislation needs to be reviewed and brought in line with the demands put upon it as a result of economic and social development.

(14) The African continent features 54 international river basins which are shared by two or more States. Some, such as the Niger, the Nile and the Congo basins, are shared by nine countries, while the Chad and the Volta basins, for example, cover part of the territories of five countries. Riparian countries of some of these basins are jointly undertaking surveys and studies which aim at the development of their resources and, in certain cases, Governments have established river basin commissions to assist them in the orderly planning and execution of development activities. Regarding a number of basins, however, no such co-operation for planning and development between riparian Governments has yet been established.

(15) The provision of safe water in many urban areas and over vast rural areas is far from satisfactory. While all countries have some programmes of water supply in their development plans, in most countries the annual increase of population is larger than the annual increase of those enjoying improved water supply from new works. A concerted effort consisting of the application of the people concerned would do much to alleviate the serious situation in many countries.

The Environment

(16) Environmental problems which call for urgent attention in the 1970s include:

- (i) Inadequate water supplies for man, animal and crops;
- (ii) The destruction of forest and grass cover leading to soil degradation and causing marginal areas to turn into desert land;
- (iii) The prevalence of water-borne and other endemic diseases;
- (iv) The importation of polluting industries into Africa;
- (v) The concentration of human population in agglomerations arising as a result of the establishment of mining and/or industrial complexes.

(17) An appropriate strategy for the improvement and protection of the environment should have the following objectives:

- (i) Improvement in the management and utilization for plant and animal resources in the game reserves so as to earn enough foreign exchange and, at the same time, to protect this unique heritage for posterity;
- (ii) Where such areas are contiguous to a number of countries, promotion of multinational co-operation in the fields of legislation, conservation, exchange of information, research projects, fishery regulations, etc.;

(iii) Improvement of the rural environment through:

- the provision of adequate potable water for man and animal;
- the construction of good but cheap dwellings using local materials;
- the provision of electricity, schools and enough health centres;
- the introduction of sound agricultural practices;

(iv) Finding solutions for:

- overcrowding in cities and the resultant peri-urban slums;
- proliferating industrial and/or mining complexes which create serious environmental problems in a number of countries;
- exportation of pollutive industries as a result of environmental consideration;
- major threats to African exports that may arise.

(18) In order to tackle these environmental problems successfully, legislation for the improvement and protection of the environment will need to be updated or passed. Where such legislation would prove of benefit to a number of countries, e.g., illicit trade in animal trophies, etc., multinational machineries should be established.

(19) In order to provide an umbrella under which problems of the environment would be handled, appropriate government machinery or commissions should be created to co-ordinate the work of the various ministries where portfolios encompass problems of the environment. It is through such machinery that recommendations from the Stockholm Conference for national and international actions in the field of the Human Environment could be carried out effectively during the 1970s.

Drought

(20) The persistence of the drought phenomenon and its geographical advance are of major concern not only to desert zones but also to those in the forest zones of Africa. Practical action to control this scourge is urgently required from international organizations in particular the Economic Commission for Africa and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme and from the whole international community on bilateral basis, and should have the following aims:

(i) Exceptional measures to alleviate the immediate consequences of the phenomenon:

- lack of food,
- livestock losses,
- loss of export earnings;

(ii) Immediate steps to:

- supply water for human and livestock requirements,
- delimit the areas affected;

- (iii) Definition, development and application of a research and study programme with a view to selecting seed varieties suited to the new climatic conditions.

Transport

(21) The objectives of a sound strategy for the development of transport in Africa during the 1970s must be based on the essential characteristics, possibilities as well as obstacles to development, of the present situation in this field. These characteristics include:

- (i) Fragmentary statistical and other information on transport in Africa which is often of varying reliability and scattered over a range of sources;
 - (ii) Exceptionally political fragmentation of the continent with its implication for difficulties in intra-African transport as well as in the co-ordination of transport policies for larger regions;
 - (iii) Unintegrated national transport networks which are more adapted to overseas than intra-African trade;
 - (iv) A transport infrastructure which is still in a rather embryonic state of development but which enables decisions concerning transport policies to be made without the more severe constraints which would otherwise have existed;
 - (v) A very short coastline in relation to the land mass due to the geographical shape of the continent, which has resulted in an exceptionally large proportion of regions which lack direct access to the sea; in fact, out of the total of 18 land-locked developing countries in the world, 13 are situated in Africa.
- (22) The value of a transport service depends on its ability to serve, at a reasonable cost, society in its economic and social development. Consequently, transport policy-making and planning should form an integral part of the general economic and social policy and planning. This requires a multi-disciplinary approach to transport problems.
- (23) The decisions on transport policy should be based on correct and complete information on the present status and trends in different modes of transport. This calls for more efficient co-ordination between different national and international organizations in the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of information on transport in Africa.
- (24) Many African countries have closer economic ties with countries outside the region than with their African neighbours. In order to promote the economic independence of African countries this trend should be reversed. This would necessitate the efficient integration of the national transport networks in order to make closer economic co-operation possible. The co-ordination and integration of national transport policies has, to a certain extent, already begun within the existing economic groupings. This trend should be strengthened and extended over the limits of the existing groupings which, in many cases, tend to reflect the realities of the pre-independence era.

(25) A large proportion of the rural population of many African countries lives under subsistence conditions only slightly touched by the benefits of economic and social development. Vast natural resources are not properly exploited due to lack of transport facilities. Integrating these human and economic resources in the national development effort necessitates a determined policy in the provision of intra-country transport. To minimize the cost of providing the basic transport infrastructure on national as well as international levels requires that the different modes of transport be handled as complementary rather than competitive. Particular attention needs to be paid to the problems of the least developed and land-locked countries in international transport questions.

(26) In the light of the above, a strategy for the development of transport in Africa in the 1970s should have the following basic objectives:

- (i) The definition of a basic transport network for the African countries including all modes of transport and fulfilling the minimum requirements of linkages between African countries and the outside world;
- (ii) The incorporation of the transport policy and planning in the general economic and social development policies and planning;
- (iii) The co-ordination of various national transport policies and plans, especially between neighbouring countries, in order to minimize the cost of providing an efficient infrastructure for intra-African co-operation;
- (iv) On the national level, the opening up of hitherto undeveloped regions by providing a minimum all-year transport network, normally consisting of roads and inland waterways.

Telecommunications

(27) The strategy for development in the 1970s in the field of telecommunications should aim at:

- (i) The general modernization and expansion of national telephone and telex networks;
- (ii) The rapid development of national radio and television broadcasting networks for education;
- (iii) The full implementation of the planned regional telecommunication network for intra-African and inter-continental communication;
- (iv) The adequate and urgent provision of regional and subregional training facilities for the continuous improvement of performance standards and engineering knowledge of senior technicians, and management and specialized training for engineers in the many new and relevant telecommunication techniques; and
- (v) The effective co-operation at the regional level of activities and development programmes in the telecommunication field.

(28) The characteristic features of most national telephone and telegraph networks are obsolescent and heterogeneous transmission equipment, relative over-concentration of services in the urban centres, and general under-development. In terms of number of telephones, the region is the least developed, with only 1.2 per cent of the world's telephones. Compared to the world's average of 7.1 telephones per 100 inhabitants, the region has an average of less than 1.0 per 100.

(29) In some countries of the region, the priority rating accorded to telecommunication development seems inadequate. The utilization factor, that is the number of telephones for each \$100,000 of gross domestic product is on the average of 3.0 compared to the minimum of 9.0 in developed countries.

(30) For the Second United Nations Development Decade, it is suggested that average figures for utilization factors of 3.5 and 6.0 for 1975 and 1980 respectively should be the targets set by most countries of the region if the development in telecommunications is to make any real impact on their economies. These figures call for rather high-level investments of the order of one to two per cent of gross domestic product in most cases.

(31) The above situation is equally true of radio and television. This service requires substantial allocation of resources to modernize and expand its production and transmission facilities. Much effort is also required to improve on current average figures of 4.3 per 100 inhabitants for radio receivers and 2.0 per 100 for television receivers and in this regard multi-national projects for low-priced receiver assembly and manufacturing plants may be called for.

(32) Investment studies for the Pan-African Telecommunication Network, involving 18,000 kms. of route distance, is almost completed and the major problem is its financing. Total investment involved is currently estimated at

about US\$100 million and recourse may have to be made to central funding through the African Development Bank in order, among other things, to preserve the concept of a single network.

(33) The increasing complexity of telecommunications science in relation to the current state of the industry in the region compels urgency in the development of training courses for senior technicians, instructors and engineers in efficient operation and specialized techniques as well as in management and financial control. A primary requirement is for a comprehensive survey to establish the basic manpower requirements in all the various fields and the number, type and location of the institutions that may be required. Such a survey co-sponsored by the International Telecommunication Union, the Economic Commission for Africa and possibly by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization also might consider ways and means of providing adequate resources for all aspects of the project.

(34) There is a trend for a regional body concerned solely with all fields of telecommunications, to review all the phases in the implementation of the Pan-African network, to co-ordinate the operation of the network when implemented, to keep the functioning of existing networks under constant review with the aim of raising performance standards, to co-ordinate national development programmes, and to be generally concerned with telecommunications development in the region. This Regional Co-ordination Body might take the form of a Union - an African Telecommunication Union.

Tourism

(35) An appropriate strategy for tourism development in the 1970s should have, as the main objectives;

- (i) The increase in Africa's share of the rapidly growing volume of international tourism enabling a large number of African countries, including the least developed countries, to benefit from the foreign exchange receipts and other advantages deriving from tourism;
- (ii) The increase in efficiency of the African Tourist industry and a rise in the profitability of its tourist enterprises, thus enabling more rapid expansion and attraction of external capital for new investments;
- (iii) The encouragement of tourist enterprises to rely increasingly on local and regional resources, thus strengthening the local and regional markets for agricultural produce and some manufactured goods, thereby saving foreign exchange.

(36) Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and Africa has the natural and cultural assets which are in great demand by tourists from the developed industrial countries. Although during the First Development Decade large scale tourism has taken hold in some African countries, various problems of tourism development have delayed growth in other countries equally endowed with touristic attractions. By solving some of the outstanding problems in air transport, infrastructure, professional training and travel promotion, and by eliminating cumbersome administrative regulations, tourism in Africa will, in the 1970s, accelerate its growth and spread throughout the region.

(37) The desire to obtain quick results has often caused hurried planning not supported by basic studies; the design and location of new plants were often not appropriate, and the development and operating costs were not always effectively controlled, nor were the development efforts matched by adequate promotion in overseas markets. In such cases, the volume of tourism, foreign exchange earnings, employment, tax revenue and profitability of tourist enterprises have fallen short of set targets. At the same time, encouraging results have been achieved in other countries. An exchange of experience on a regular basis would greatly increase the efficiency and profitability of tourism enterprises in African countries and enable them to benefit fully from the overall favourable conditions for tourism development.

(38) In planning tourism development and designing hotels and other tourist facilities in Africa, little has been done in a number of countries to utilize as much as possible local construction material and locally manufactured equipment and to maximize the use of local supplies in hotel operation while in other countries very good results have been achieved in these fields. By paying more attention to aspects such as the construction of tourist plant and catering for the rapidly growing numbers of foreign tourists, demand for the products of local industry and locally-produced foodstuffs, and the development of local production will be strengthened. At the same time foreign exchange expenditure of the tourism industry will be reduced.

(39) In order to achieve the basic aims set above, the following should form part of an overall strategy for Africa:

- (i) Careful studies of trends and patterns of the tourist demand in overseas market, the results of which should be made available to African countries;
- (ii) Protection, conservation and development of natural and cultural attractions which are in demand by the tourist public;
- (iii) Co-operation with civil aviation authorities and air transport companies in order to reconcile the financial interests of the companies with the wider interests of African countries in securing inexpensive transportation of holiday visitors from overseas;
- (iv) Organization of joint travel promotion in overseas markets by groups of neighbouring African countries;
- (v) Elimination of administrative restrictions and other impediments to free holiday travel;
- (vi) Research of profitability of hotel industry and tour operation business, the results of which should be made available to interested countries;
- (vii) Organization of professional training for higher level jobs in hotel industry and tourist trade through the co-operation of African countries on subregional basis;
- (viii) Co-ordination of the requirements for tourist infrastructure with the requirements of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in order to widen the markets of local and regional goods;

- (ix) Adaptation of design for new hotels and other tourist plant to the needs of maximizing the use of locally available material and equipment;
- (x) Increased use of local produce and products of regional industries in hotel supplies.

Science and Technology Development

(40) The main objectives of an African strategy for the development of science and technology for this decade are:

- (i) The introduction of improved technologies in small- and medium-scale industries in order to raise quality and productivity;
- (ii) The improvement in arrangements for the transfer and adaptation of knowledge and technology already available in more developed countries;
- (iii) The establishment of, or improvement in, institutions for the training of personnel at the professional, technician and craftsman levels, to enable the application of modern science and technology to development;
- (iv) The mobilization and direction of efforts of scientists and research organizations in Africa towards the solution of development problems encountered by African enterprises;
- (v) The promotion of deeper knowledge and awareness among Governments, the science and engineering community, the general public and, especially, the youth of Africa, of their countries' need for science and technology;
- (vi) The encouragement of intra-African co-operation in the development of science and technology institutions and programmes.

(41) Short-term and medium-term objectives should be clearly defined at country level and kept distinct from long-term objectives as far as possible. Short-term programmes should deal primarily with the adaptation and application of existing knowledge to cope with such needs as health, food and education. The long-term programmes will have as their objectives institutional development, particularly research and development, reorientation, and the improvement of basic education in science and technology. Individual countries must select projects for institutions they can effectively maintain out of their resources on a long-term basis, and should arrange to co-operate with neighbouring countries for the establishment and use of more complex and costly institutions.

(42) A very important component of an African strategy should relate to the development of a mental climate favourable to the adoption of innovation and the attendant changes in outlook, local culture and pattern of life. This implies a determined effort in adult education programmes to explain the significance and possibilities of the new technology. It also assumes the existence of support programmes to facilitate the transition to new patterns of community organization and functioning.

(43) Emphasis should be placed upon the contribution of science and technology to food and agriculture, to industrial technology, natural resources development, rural development and indigenous scientific and technological capacity. The African approach in all these and the other fields should follow closely the African Regional Plan of the World Plan of Action for the Application of Science and Technology to Development.

171st meeting,
22 February 1973.