



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

---

52738



Distr.  
LIMITED

E/CN.14/APSA.4  
12 April 1973

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Meeting of the African Purchasing and Supplies  
Officers for the Establishment  
of an African Purchasing and Supplies  
Association

Dakar, 28 May - 2 June 1973

AIDE-MEMOIRE

I. ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND

1. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) sponsored two regional seminars on International procurement at Nairobi and Dakar for English- and French-speaking African countries respectively in 1972, as part of a series of global seminars for the countries of the developing regions. The seminars were financed by the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA).

2. Expertise for both seminars was drawn from a much wider field which included the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Section for Organization and Methods in the United Nations Public Administration Division (New York), the IBRD, the Crown Agents, the Commission of the European Economic Communities, the Organization and Methods Bureau in the Senegalese President's Office and the Institut de productivité et de gestion prévisionnelle at Bamako.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINARS

3. The Seminars were intended to help developing countries improve the use of their foreign exchange resources when importing goods and services, by giving officials a better knowledge of the problems and techniques involved in international procurement, particularly in relation to international development finance.

III. PROGRAMME OF THE SEMINARS

4. The Seminars were conducted in English and French respectively and each lasted for a period of three weeks. Attention was focused on giving practical advice on the commercial and legal problems connected with the import into developing countries of goods and services and on discussing methods of solving selected problems.

5. The Seminars provided an ideal opportunity for a discussion of a wider range of subjects in the field of procurement and allowed participants to exchange views among themselves and have fruitful personal contacts.

#### IV. RESULTS OF THE SEMINARS

6. Up to now, practically all purchasing and procurement commissions are more or less automatically referred to developed countries without taking other possibilities into serious consideration. In recent years, however, local industries have been established in a number of African countries. Their main objectives were import substitution as a means of reducing the need for foreign exchange and a fuller use of local resources.

7. At the Nairobi Seminar, participants decided to establish a professional association of African purchasing and supplies. One of the purposes of the Association was to collect and disseminate to its members information on African sources of supply, thereby reinforcing efforts made by Chambers of Commerce and export bodies in various African countries to promote intra-African trade. It was also envisaged that the Association would strive to foster professionalism in the supplies field by publishing a journal, by arranging meetings and seminars and by sponsoring training and administrative reform schemes. With this end in view, participants in the Nairobi Seminar drafted and adopted a formal resolution to establish an African Purchasing and Supplies Association. They charged a seven-man Interim Executive Committee with the task of drafting articles in accordance with certain guidelines.

8. The representatives of UNITAR and ECA pledged their willingness to help the Association in its formative stages and to discuss, at a latter stage, support for substantive activities.

9. The formal launching of the Association was postponed to allow participants in the Dakar Seminar to deliberate on the issue as a means of combining efforts in Africa and in order to strengthen the Association, which should represent both the English- and French-speaking African countries.

10. Participants in the second African Seminar on International Procurement (Dakar) took note of the initiative taken at the Nairobi Seminar and passed a resolution approving, in principle, the need to establish an African Purchasing and Supplies Association. They also approved the calling of a meeting during the first half of 1973 to set up the Association. Furthermore, they expressed the view that the establishment of an African Purchasing and Supplies Association needed the endorsement of the African Governments concerned. The hope was also expressed that the participants in the UNITAR Seminars held at Nairobi and Dakar would be included in their countries' delegations to the 1973 meeting. A three-man Provisional Co-ordinating Committee was set up.

11. The seven-man Interim Executive Committee has had fruitful contact with the three-man Provisional Co-ordinating Committee, ECA and UNITAR (Geneva). On receipt of a request for assistance from the Interim Executive Committee, the Executive Secretary of ECA made available officers from the secretariat to assist APSA in its formative stages and, in particular, to service the meeting to be held at Dakar.

## V. THE MEETING

12. The meeting is to be held at Dakar (Senegal) at the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) from 28 May to 2 June 1973 with financial assistance of the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA).

13. An important function of the meeting will be to examine the Draft Statutes of the African purchasing and supplies officers and submit a draft report and recommendations to African Governments and related African institutions.

14. Other practical problems facing procurement services and officers in developing Africa will be considered under seven headings and each will be preceded by an opening address describing the main topics as shown in the provisional agenda below:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work of the meeting.
4. Establishment of the African Purchasing and Supplies Association (APSA).
5. Practical problems facing procurement services and officers in developing African countries:
  - (a) The role of procurement officers in developing Africa;
  - (b) Procurement problems faced by African national purchasing institutions;
  - (c) Purchasing policies of African Governments and how they can be used to assist in the expansion of Intra-African trade;
  - (d) Promotion of legislation, rules and regulations to guide national supplies and purchasing policies of developing countries within the context of the general conditions of sale;
  - (e) Development and application of techniques with respect to supplies, purchasing operations and management;
  - (f) Measures for aiding developing African countries in their international procurement for public sector purposes, including the establishment of advisory services;
  - (g) Training opportunities for procurement officers in developed countries;
6. Any other business.
7. Date and place of the Inaugural meeting of the African Purchasing and Supplies Association.
8. Adoption of the report.

## VI. NOMINATIONS

15. In view of the nature of the meeting, it is desirable that nominees be high-level officials possessing sufficient technical experience in the field of procurement so as to be able to participate meaningfully in the meeting. Where applicable, it is recommended that participants in the two previous African regional seminars at Nairobi and Dakar be included in lists of nominees.

16. The nominations should be submitted by cable, followed by letter, to the Chief, Trade, Fiscal and Monetary Affairs Division, Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as soon as possible, and in any case not later than 11 May 1973.

## VII. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

17. The letter of invitation provides details of fellowships to cover the cost of tourist air travel between the country of origin of participants and Dakar (Senegal) and subsistence allowance in accordance with the regulations of the United Nations.

18. It is incumbent upon Governments to pay travel and subsistence for those participants who are not accorded fellowships.

19. All participating Governments will be responsible for defraying the following:

- (a) All expenditure in the country of origin relating to travel abroad of the fellow, including the cost of visas, medical examinations, vaccinations etc. and the cost of travel to and from the airport in the country of origin;
- (b) The salaries and allowances of participants during the meeting.

20. The United Nations WILL NOT defray the following:

- (a) Travel or other expenditure by persons accompanying participants;
- (b) Expenditure by participants in respect of travel or accident insurance, medical treatment or hospitalization relating to attendance at the meeting;
- (c) Compensation in the event of death or injury of participants relating to attendance at the meeting;
- (d) Loss or damage to articles belonging to participants while they are attending the meeting.

-----