



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.: LIMITED

E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC.XI/10
9 May 1990

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

**REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE AFRICA REGIONAL
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE INTEGRATION OF
WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,
7 to 8 May 1990

A. PARTICIPATING AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The eleventh meeting of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) was held in Tripoli, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya from 7 to 8 May 1990.

2. Nine out of the 15 member States of ARCC attended the meeting: Cameroon, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Rwanda and Zaire. Three member States of ECA - Tunisia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania - participated as observers and Nigeria as honorary member of ARCC. Representatives from the following organizations in the United Nations system and/or specialized agencies also attended as observers: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations also attending as observers were: Organization of African Unity (OAU) Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Opening ceremony (agenda item 1)

3. Madam Salimin, Vice-Chairman of the Peoples Congress of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, addressed the meeting. She welcomed all national delegates and participants from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations attending the ARCC meeting to the hospitable land of the Jamahiriya. She informed participants of the significant role played by Libyan women in the struggle for freedom and the elimination of any discrimination against women. Continuing, she said that it was well known in Libya that Arab women shouldered their responsibilities to the State as well as at home.

4. She said that Libyan women were not suppressed but that they were leaders and held high and responsible positions in the Government.

5. In his opening statement, Professor Adebayo Adedeji, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa referred to the fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development which was held in Abuja, Nigeria, in November 1989. He said that the picture that emerged from the assessment of the implementation of the Arusha Strategies as reported by member States, United Nations agencies and NGOs during the Abuja Conference showed that some modest progress had been made. However, he added, that women were carrying more responsibilities because of the developments and the economic crises currently facing African countries.

6. He informed the meeting that, in 1984, female unemployment worldwide had been 2.9 per cent and by 1988 it had increased to 13.4 per cent. Male unemployment, on the other hand, had been 9.4 per cent in 1984 and had decreased to 8.3 per cent in 1988. Worldwide, he said, women still earned only two-thirds of men's pay and often depended on informal trade for their survival.

7. Continuing, he referred to the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation adopted at the International Conference on Popular Participation which had taken place in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 12 to 16 February 1990. In view of the critical contributions made by women to African societies and economies and the discrimination and subordination suffered by women in Africa, he stated that the Charter recommended that the attainment of equal rights by women in social, economic and political spheres must become a central feature of a democratic and participatory pattern of development. With that, he

urged participants, as members and leaders of women organizations, to play their role effectively and to ensure that the measures recommended in the Charter for improving the status of women were fully implemented.

8. Turning to the Abuja Declaration entitled Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s, adopted at the fourth Regional Conference, he reminded delegates as members of ARCC representing various countries within their respective subregions to sensitize and ensure the implementation of the Abuja Declaration.

9. In conclusion, he reminded participants of the task before them. On this, he referred to the issues as presented in the provisional agenda which, he added, were very crucial and hoped that participants will take time to ponder on each one, reflecting on their past experiences and in particular on the outcome of the fourth Regional Conference. He also appealed to participants to take time and participate in the meeting of the Conference of Ministers. This, he said, would give them a chance to share experiences with the menfolks, not only on women's concerns but also on issues germane to the overall development of Africa. He then wished all participants fruitful deliberations and an enjoyable stay in Tripoli.

10. Following the Executive Secretary's statement, Miss Naima Esgair, leader of the National Libyan Women's Association who also chaired the meeting of ARCC responded to the appeal made by the Executive Secretary and stressed that participants must pay attention to all the problems before them. She further emphasized the role and position played by Libyan women in overall national development. Continuing, she said, women had a special motivation for unity and hoped that the meeting would facilitate exchange of experiences in order to arrive at a better understanding of the role played by African women.

B. AGENDA

Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 2)

11. The meeting adopted the following agenda for its eleventh meeting with additional items under agenda item 10 (any other business):

1. Opening ceremony.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report to ARCC on the activities of the ECA programme for the advancement of women.
4. Report to ARCC on the meetings of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW and the Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).
5. Note on implementation of the Abuja Declaration: Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s.
6. Comparative study of national laws on the rights and status of women in Africa.
7. Report on expert group meeting to review documents:
 - (a) Handbook on "accessing women to credit - A package approach";

- (b) Guide for the promotion and development of African women entrepreneurs and their access to credit.
- 8. Mobilization of regional support for the project "Improving African women's role in the informal sector - Production and management".
- 9. Note on election of ARCC members in 1991.
- 10. Any other business:
 - (a) International Year of the Family 1994;
 - (b) Convention on the Right of the Child.
- 11. Adoption of the report.

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Report to ARCC on the activities of the ECA programme for the advancement of women (agenda item 3)

12. Under this agenda item, the ECA representative introduced document E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC.XI/90/3 in three major parts: (a) implementation of ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 666 (XXIV); (b) implementation of the work programme during the period April 1989 - April 1990; and (c) planned activities for the period 1990-1991.

13. Concerning the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution, she indicated that great efforts had been made to mobilize resources for financing women's programmes of the ECA MULPOCs particularly in the North African and the Great Lakes subregions with contributions coming from Egypt, Zaire and Canada respectively. She added that funds had been gathered for the preparation and organization of the fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development held in Abuja, Nigeria in November 1989 and for the celebration of the tenth anniversary of ARCC. A film produced on the event was to be shown during the meeting.

14. She then gave an overview of the activities undertaken in the context of the work programme ~~was~~ very concise and limited to the following four areas (a) participation of women in development; (b) improving skills and opportunities for women; (c) establishment and strengthening of machineries for the integration of women in development; and (d) information network on women and development. The activities carried out were mainly research work undertaken in the fields of planning, agriculture, rural development and access to resources. Operational activities had been concentrated in the areas of the informal sector and access of women to credit.

15. The ECA representative stressed the importance of two major documents produced, namely a guide for inclusion of women's issues in national development plans which outlined factors to be taken into consideration in these plans and the Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development: the role of Women in Africa in the 1990s which was adopted by the fourth Regional Conference. She explained in detail that the Declaration provides a review of the implementation of the Arusha Strategies indicating the degree of achievement of goals set in the Strategies. Referring to the review, she mentioned that great progress had been recorded in such fields as law, primary education, institutional structures, while employment, access to resources and health had had slow progress. The review further revealed that action

had only just been instated in the promotion of women's advancement in science and technology, decision-making, mainstreaming as well as environmental issues. Most important, the Declaration contained priorities for the 1990s and such specific targets for the year 2000 as "women should represent at least 20 per cent of total enrolment at university level in the field of science and technology"; "at least one out of five of all vacant government professional posts should be filled by a woman". The ECA representative took the opportunity to call upon every ARCC member to ensure the implementation of the Declaration.

16. Finally, the speaker highlighted the close co-operation existing between ECA and other United Nations institutions, about participation in activities of other United Nations organizations and informed the meeting that among the activities in favour of women planned for 1990-1991 a great number were to be implemented by ECA's substantive divisions dealing with agriculture, industry, trade, statistics as well as population issues.

17. During the discussion that followed, it was noted that the scope of ECA activities related to the integration of women in development was vast and required greater co-ordination within the region and with other organizations conducting similar programmes outside the region. Many comments were made on the Abuja Declaration of Abuja. Participants reiterated the importance of such document. However, some participants expressed their concern about the implementation of the Declaration in individual countries and suggested that the focus should be on a few goals over a short period. In this regard, it was pointed out that the purpose of the Declaration was to give broad guidelines and it was the role of each country to adapt them to its specific needs.

18. The Libyan women were congratulated for taking the initiative to create a Centre for Research Study for Arab Women. In this connection, it was recalled that women should continue to claim their rights and dully assume their responsibilities in the community. Stressing the need to give equal chances to all member States to understand and make use of the Declaration, participants requested that the text of the Declaration should be translated into the Arabic language. This would enable everyone to make fruitful use of it. That request was noted. Some participants observed that preparation of a plan of co-ordination between different research institutes working in the fields of development planning in all regions and subregions of Africa should be drawn. This will enable research institutes to access the real and actual status of women in all regions and countries and therefore target priority programmes according to the needs of the regions. In this context, the establishment of data banks and information networks at all levels was a must.

Note on implementation of the Abuja Declaration: Participatory development: The role of women in Africa in the 1990s (agenda item 5)

19. In introducing document E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC.XI/90/5 entitled "Note on implementation of the Abuja Declaration", the representative of the secretariat indicated that the purpose of the document was to stimulate discussion on how to operationalize the Declaration. Among various measures, she suggested emphasis should be placed on wide dissemination of the Declaration and that national machineries and all Women Development focal points should develop plans and strategies for the implementation of the Declaration giving themselves short-term targets. Translation of the Declaration into national languages and organization of national seminars to disseminate it were also highly recommended. Other measures included mobilization of funds and regular monitoring of its implementation.

20. The discussion that followed showed the possibility of using the media, i.e., radio and television as additional means of dissemination of the Declaration. African women were also called upon to ensure active participation in the suggested activities at all levels.

Report to ARCC on the meetings of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW and the Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (agenda item 4)

21. Introducing document E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC.XI/90/4 on this agenda item, the representative of the secretariat informed participants of the meeting of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women which was held in Vienna at the International Centre from 26 February to 9 March 1990. The membership of the Commission consisted of 45 member States, 13 of which were from Africa. That meeting had reviewed and appraised progress made by governments, international organizations and NGOs in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Various committees had dealt with various issues assigned from the agenda of the meeting.

22. She informed participants that many representative had noted the difficulties in implementing the Nairobi Strategies. The basic problems had been aggravated by the economic crisis and adjustment policies whose impact would have to be minimized for women who were in a weaker position to cope with the situation due to their multiple roles.

23. Finally, recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women up to the year 2000 had been presented and discussed. Those recommendations, numbering 24, constituted the most important outcome of the Commission meeting and focused on equality, development, peace and national machineries. In substance, they followed the provisions of the Abuja Declaration and were to be given the extent of publicity described in the annex to the report.

24. In introducing the second part of the document, the representative of the secretariat briefed the meeting on the tenth session of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW which had been held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from 12 to 16 February 1990. On co-operation with regional commissions, she informed participants of the various activities which INSTRAW and ATRCW had conducted jointly. In her view, the major outcome of the fourth Regional Conference on WID had been the adoption of the Abuja Declaration. Participatory Development: The Role of Women in Africa in the 1990s. Concerning the Abuja Declaration, she appealed to INSTRAW, United Nations agencies and organizations attending the Board meeting and in particular those having projects and/or activities in the African region to take into account the Abuja Declaration and implement the recommendations elaborated therein in whatever way possible.

25. Following the meeting of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees, a two-day consultative meeting was held between INSTRAW and the regional commissions with a view to considering and developing parallel programming activities between INSTRAW and the regional commissions in accordance with ECOSOC resolution 199/43 and the General Assembly resolution 4460. This, it was agreed, would further strengthen co-operation between INSTRAW and the regional commissions as well as facilitate the exchange of information and experiences on a comparative basis.

26. Given the importance of the growing informal sector and the predominance of women in the sector worldwide, it was agreed that parallel programming of activities

in this sector should be conducted. With this objective in mind, regional commissions have developed brief proposals and submitted them to INSTRAW for compilation and finalization taking regional specificities into account. A formal conceptual document would be brought to the attention of the executive secretaries at their next meeting in July 1990.

27. As part of the close co-operation that existed between ATRCW and UNIFEM a four-day meeting had been held between UNIFEM and ECA/ATRCW immediately after the meeting with INSTRAW. After reviewing the various activities funded and undertaken in collaboration with UNIFEM, ATRCW together with a consultant commissioned by UNIFEM, had prepared a progress report on the review and appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD). The progress report which was to be submitted to the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force secretariat contained two elements, namely "Strengthening capacities of African women farmers" and "Assessment of progress and problems in strengthening engagement of African women as agents of development at all levels".

28. During the ensuing discussion, various observations were made with particular reference to the Abuja Declaration. The INSTRAW representative also took the opportunity to elaborate on the nature and programme activities of INSTRAW. She informed participants of the role played by the Institute as an autonomous and global body whose core activities comprised research and training, information, documentation and communication. The research and training programmes were grouped into four clusters, namely statistics, indicators and data on women, issues relevant for policy design, sectoral issues and training methodologies for women in development. She also elaborated on INSTRAW's mode of operation which, she said, was based on networking at the international, regional and national levels. This system facilitated close co-operation with the regional commissions, other United Nations bodies and agencies, government and non-governmental institutions and INSTRAW focal points. She also informed ARCC members that the INSTRAW Board of Trustees was celebrating its tenth anniversary throughout the year 1990 with a view to make the role of INSTRAW more visible and more viable at the national and international levels.

The meeting took note of the report.

Comparative study of national laws on rights and status of women in Africa (agenda item 6)

29. In presenting this report (E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC.XI/90/6), the representative of the secretariat explained that the legal issues discussed in the report were derived from research studies on law and the status of women, undertaken in several countries in Africa. These studies were conducted from 1979 to 1987. The primary objective of the study was to show an overview of the legal status of women in Africa in general and in these African countries where case studies were undertaken in particular. Legal topics discussed in the report included: political and civic rights; civil law - family law; penal laws; employment and law; education and law, health, family planning and law. In conclusion, the study advanced some recommendations.

30. In discussing the legal status of women in Africa, the presenter briefly reviewed the legal status of women. Referring to the political and civic rights for example, she elaborated on the constitutional equality of all men and women and the possible problems that women experienced in terms of granting or losing citizenship, legal capacity and exercising electoral rights. Factors and/or traditional causes which restrict women from participation in the elections and other political

activities were pointed out. They included, among others, illiteracy, inadequate information on politics, high cost and time consumption.

31. Variety in marriage systems were also pointed out. The presenter made reference to the various problems associated with marriage, especially as regards divorce, separation and widowhood. These problems as pointed out included property rights, inheritance and children custody. The rights and status of women with regard to employment, education and training, health and family planning were also discussed. For example, the study showed that protective legal provisions were available only for those women engaged in industry or similar undertakings. A more definite statutory access of women to education, training and information will help women to fulfil their double role adequately.

32. In view of the various problems encountered by women in exercising and understanding their rights, the report advanced some recommendations which included the reviewing and updating of the existing legislation, the establishment of appropriate government bodies to monitor these changes, the adoption of new laws, the organization of legal education for school children and the provision of a special legal education on the rights and status of women in the formal and informal sectors. The recommendations also underscored various measures for interpreting legal provisions in order to make them clearly understood by a vast majority of people, especially women. Here, the mass media, newspapers and magazines were to play a major role.

33. In the discussion that followed, observations were made by several participants from the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Egypt, Tunisia, Mauritania, INSTRAW and ILO participants expressed concern over the generalized nature of the report, especially as regards the rights and status of women in Africa. More detailed information on the subject was required concerning the social, religious, economic and traditional values and practices influencing the rights and status of women. The report was also expected to emphasize what could be done to enable women to benefit from their rights, which it did not. With regard to the conclusions drawn from the analytical work especially those concerned with Moslem laws, it was suggested that a group of experts should revise and correct such anomalies. Secondly, it was further recommended that the international community should make more efforts towards abolishing all forms of discrimination and suppression, especially in case of Palestinian and South African women.

34. Speaking on the rights and status of women, the ILO representative suggested that ECA/ATRCW should consider the application of the international labour standards as another means of promoting equality of opportunity for women in employment. The comparative study could possibly look at how ratified conventions on women workers were being implemented. Examples of such standards cited and they included the equal Remuneration Convention 100, the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 111 and the "Workers with family responsibilities" 156.

35. Responding to the various comments and concern expressed by participants, the ECA secretariat thanked participants for their interventions and constructive comments. The secretariat admitted that the limited case studies cited in the report did not make for a full justification of the adopted generalization. ECA took note of the comments and requested member States to provide information, where available, for its future undertakings on the subject.

Report on expert group meeting to review documents on (a) handbook on accessing women to credit - a packaged approach (b) a guide for the promotion and development of African women entrepreneurship and their access to credit (agenda item 7)

36. In her introduction, the ECA representative started by showing that the subject matter under review, accessing women to credit and developing women entrepreneurship, was in line with actions recommended for development and transformation of African economies. She reported that 11 experts had been invited on 2 to 5 April 1990 in their individual capacity to examine the above-mentioned documents. These experts made very relevant observations which helped to improve on the papers. She then gave a brief of each of the documents. The document on accessing women to credit covered mainly: (a) problems and constraints within which women participate in economic development, (b) the suggested approach which calls for a dosage of various resources and support measures that would render women credit - worthy and wise entrepreneurs, (c) the various elements to be considered in designing credit and entrepreneurship development programmes, and (d) the package of assistance required. The paper also contained measures required for operationalizing the approach such as: (a) the setting up of a co-ordinating institution, (b) resources mobilization and (c) development of credit programmes.
37. The representative further highlighted observations made by the experts on the issue of accessing women to credit in general and the various steps suggested for building favourable mediation mechanism for accessing African individual women or groups of women to credit. The steps included planning, training, field workers to develop bankable projects, assessment of projects, provision of loans, training in small business, management and monitoring. In the case of groups of women, additional steps were needed to mobilize women and form groups then register the identified groupings.
38. Major changes which were recommended by experts were (a) the title of the project should be "Increasing access of women to credit - an integrated approach", (b) micro- and macro-activities should be specified, (c) the target group should be considered in terms of level of entrepreneurship i.e. pre-entrepreneurs, micro-entrepreneurs and large-scale entrepreneurs.
39. The second document "Guide for promotion and development of African women entrepreneurs and their access to credit" was based on experience from three pilot countries, namely Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda. The guide gave an analysis of the situation in the three countries, the interventions, areas for support services as well as monitoring and evaluation. Again, the experts made very useful observations on how to reduce the volume of the document and make it easy to use.
40. Recommendations made by the experts were operationalization of the measures called for in the two documents, their wide dissemination through a regional dissemination seminar as well as sectoral seminars organized at subregional levels, organization of a study tour of bank officials to places used to deal with disadvantaged women, extension of the project to enable the implementation of the above measures.
41. In the ensuing comments, participants shared their experiences in the field of credit. The United Republic of Tanzania had for example already administered three credit schemes for women and had established a women desk in the bank plus there was a Tanzania business women association whose member were mainly from the informal sector. Cameroon also had an association of business women and several other women's economic groups and a number of women were already engaged in large-scale industries. The women could even mobilize tontines.

42. In the case of Libya, it was reported that women were considered as equal partners to men and that with the enterprises systems women could start any projects provided they were qualified and had the experience required to do so. There were enterprises at individual and family levels. The Jamahiriya had also considered the prospects of marketing women's products. The major question of women at this stage was found to be how to meet the new challenges set for the 1990s and how to dynamise women in a context of crisis. There was also a general consensus on the need to improve information network between ECA and member States.

Mobilization of Regional Support for the project "Improving African women's role in the informal sector production and management" (agenda item 8)

43. The Chief Technical Advisor of the project on "Improving the role of African women in informal sector, production and management" introduced document E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC.XI/90/8. The document dealt in its five parts with the background of the project; difficulties encountered; results achieved; conclusions of available case studies; and recommendation. Her presentation formed part of the implementation of a recommendation adopted by the Project Steering Committee which had met in September 1989 in Lusaka, Zambia.

44. In her introductory remarks, she stressed that the informal sector played a primary role in the economic process and absorbed a major part of manpower. She recalled that the Arusha and Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies had drawn attention to the situation of women in that sector and requested the governments to recognize the need to improve their working conditions by facilitating their access to credit, training and technologies. In its fourth Programming Cycle, the United Nations Development Programme gave priority to the project which was being executed within the framework of a multi-sectoral and multi-agency approach. In this respect, organizations namely: ECA, OAU, ILO, INSTRAW with the co-operation of the United Nations Statistics Office (UNSO) were involved in the implementation of the project.

45. Moving on, she explained the contents and institutional framework of the project with ECA as the executing agency and in charge of the policy component together with OAU and in collaboration with ILO. INSTRAW, UNIFEM and ILO are in charge of the statistics, credit and training components respectively. She highlighted the objectives of the project namely strengthening the planning capabilities of all institutions concerned about productivity and production of women in the informal sector; development of appropriate approaches and techniques through statistical data collection and processing on the participation and working conditions of women in the sector; identification and dissemination of policy options and appropriate strategies for training and technical assistance in self-employment, and identification and development of effective credit systems for poor women in the sector. In achieving these objectives, various activities have been planned and were being implemented in phases by the various agencies concerned in the four pilot countries: Burkina Faso, Congo, the Gambia and Zambia.

46. As regards to strengthening of the role of women in the informal sector through regional support, it was noted that the promotion of women activities in the informal sector was not given the necessary support in the national development plans and programmes. In this connection, the operation of the informal sector and their contribution to the national production were not reflected in the economic analyses.

47. In conclusion, it was pointed out that in the light of the current situation, efforts should be made to bring together the operators of the sector in a flexible

and feasible effective manner. Accordingly, an adequate legal framework could be established with the view to improve the working conditions of the informal sector.

48. In the discussion that followed, several participants appreciated the efforts being made by the secretariat in the informal sector. The OAU representative confirmed that the project policy component was being implemented together with the ECA and she hoped that Africa would continue to support the project. She also informed participants that a resolution on the project had been presented to the OAU Labour Commission meeting at its thirtieth Ordinary Session and will be presented to the OAU heads of State during its next meeting for adoption. In her intervention, the delegate from Cameroon expressed the fear of formalizing the activities of the informal sector in which men were becoming increasingly skilled and gaining in number to the detriment of women. Should that trend continue, care would need to be taken to ensure that national machineries did not adopt inappropriate solutions. INSTRAW should be requested to find out a way for determining the economic contribution of women to GDP.

49. The UNDP representative took the floor on three items which essentially dealt with:

- UNDP activities in the area of the training of women for development;
- The exchange of information;
- The presentation relating to the project on the strengthening of the role of women in the informal sector.

With regard to UNDP activities, he mentioned projects on the integration of women in development which have been allotted \$6 million on the budget of the fourth cycle of the UNDP planning; as well as the unit financing of the OAU Women's Unit by UNDP and UNIFEM whose funds are managed by UNDP. He deplored the lack of communication between ATRCW and his office since he was not invited to the meeting on credit organized by ATRCW in April in Addis Ababa. Finally, as regards the project on the strengthening of the role of women in the informal sector, he confirmed the holding of the next Steering Committee meeting in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, by the end of May.

50. The representative from WHO referred to the complex interrelation between the health of women and their social, political, cultural and economic situation. She said that WHO would be willing to work with ECA, ARCC and countries in integrating health in the social and economic activities including the informal sector. The meeting took note of the report.

Note on the election of ARCC members in 1991 (agenda item 9)

51. Under this item, the ECA representative recalled the structure and functioning of ARCC also shown in the document No. E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC.XI/90/9. In this regard, she indicated that ARCC exists since ten years and has a two years mandate. She went on to explain that the last elections of ARCC members took place in 1987. In 1989, the membership of ARCC had to be extended to 1991 because subregional committee meetings had not been able to meet and hold elections of their bureaux. Since women in development structures at subregional level were part of the MULPOCs whose future is uncertain, the ECA representative called for reflection on what ARCC membership should be from 1991.

52. The discussion focused on alternative options for holding elections:

- (a) To continue using the MULPOC structures;
- (b) Elections of ARCC members could take place during the regional conference meetings;
- (c) Subregional groupings such as ECOWAS, PTA etc. could be used for bringing together women in each subregion with a view to hold elections;

The Structures of the Pan-African Women's Organization, which is an intergovernmental organization with relevant structures could be used also for the purpose as interim solution or permanent solution in case there are still difficulties with the MULPOCs. This was found to be a way of revitalizing PAWO and PAWD representative confirmed her willingness to collaborate with ECA and ARCC.

- (d) A committee of wise women should be set up to examine the situation, consult with all subregional groups and make recommendations on the future of ARCC.

53. The meeting concluded that ECA should explore all possibilities and make recommendations to the next meeting.

Any other business (agenda item 10)

54. The OAU representative confirmed the establishment of a women's unit in the OAU secretariat as announced in Abuja by the OAU Secretary-General during the fourth Regional Conference. She added that as from now on, the OAU will be able to fully play its role as ex-officio member of ARCC. She then highlighted women in development activities of the unit stating that women issues were also reflected in the overall programme of the organization.

55. She then informed ARCC members on (i) the African Decade on Survival Protection and Development of the Child which emphasizing the need to reduce mother and child mortality, the improvement of education and health; (ii) the African Convention on Rights and Welfare of the Child; (iii) the implementation of the Bamako initiative related to the needs of women and children in primary health care; (iv) the recommendations of Bangkok Conference on Education for all which called for education and alphabetization of all women; (v) The African convention on toxic dumps; (vi) the need to ensure participation of Africans to the arrival meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Adoption of the report agenda item 11)

56. After deliberations, the eleventh meeting of ARCC adopted the report as amended. A vote of thanks from participants is annexed to the report. The meeting closed on 8 May 1990.

ANNEX

VOTE OF THANKS

At the end of the Eleventh Meeting of ARCC held in Tripoli on 7 and 8 May 1990 at the People's Congress Hall, African sisters participating in that Meeting great wish to extend their greetings and gratitude to the leader of the First September (Al Fattel) Revolution for his continuing support of women's advancement at the African and international levels, and for the great achievements being registered in matters related to women's progress in the Great Jamahiriya which is a significant indicator of that support. We hope your support will also include African women wherever they may be.