



**UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**



Distr.:  
GENERAL

E/ECA/TRADE/91/12  
30 April 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Eleventh Session of the Conference  
of African Ministers of Trade

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
18-19 April 1991

**REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE  
OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF TRADE**

## INTRODUCTION

1. The eleventh session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 18 to 19 April 1991. The Conference was opened by His Excellency Mr. Wollie Chekol, Member of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia and Deputy Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE). Statements were also made by Mr. Tchouta-Moussa, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and Mr. Dirar, Director of Economic Co-operation and Development on behalf of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).
2. Opening the Conference, His Excellency Mr. Wollie Chekol, Member of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia and Deputy Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia welcomed all delegates to the Eleventh Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade and expressed the wish that deliberations during the session would be successful and productive. He then proceeded to stress the importance his government attaches to the session which as he pointed out, was being held three months after the special session of the Ministerial meeting that adopted the "Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade (STRRAGAT) in the 1990s and Beyond" as well as having declared the 1990s, as the "Trade and Development Decade for Africa".
3. The Deputy Prime Minister reiterated further the singular importance of the STRRAGAT because it went a long way towards addressing major constraints that adversely affect Africa's trade prospects. In this regard, he voiced the view that the STRRAGAT contained imaginative policy measures that if implemented would greatly facilitate the expansion of domestic, intra-African and international trade.
4. However, he regretted the fact that the trade sector in Africa continued to show disappointing performance in spite of all the efforts deployed, by most African countries. Among the causes of the problems he emphasised were those that partly emanated from over dependence on a narrow range of primary commodities, particularly as some international commodity agreements had failed to stabilize the world price structure. He also pointed to Africa's failure to pursue appropriate policies among the contributing factor to the worsening of the region's economic plight.
5. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed the fact that Africa's future lay in economic diversification based on greater exploitation of its own resources through increased and qualitatively improved processing that took advantage of value added. He was of the view also that such action would greatly contribute to counteract the adverse effects of price fluctuations.
6. Concluding his statement, the Deputy Prime Minister drew attention to progress made in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) to which the meeting of experts gave great prominence. He therefore called upon the eleventh Ministerial Session not to lose sight of the need by the African region to ensure that the interests of Africa do not continue to be marginalized. He

furthermore reminded the Conference participants to prepare thoroughly for the seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 which would precede Africa's participation in the eighth session of UNCTAD.

7. Mr. Tchouta-Moussa, Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), on behalf of the Executive Secretary, welcomed the distinguished delegates to Africa Hall. He recalled the fact that this was a statutory session and was being held three months after the extraordinary session that adopted the "Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and Beyond".

8. He observed that the overall economy of the region improved only marginally in 1990 in spite of the continued economic restructuring, policy reforms and adjustment efforts by most African States. The main causes in his view accounting for Africa's economic recession were attributed to the mounting debt service obligations and the collapse in the prices of primary commodities. These had combined to adversely affect Africa's terms of trade.

9. The Deputy Executive Secretary also attributed the region's disappointing performance to a number of internal bottlenecks as equally responsible for the present situation, including the stagnation of export performance.

10. With respect to major events in the international trading environment since the tenth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade, Mr. Tchouta-Moussa made specific reference to the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, the coming into force of the Lomé IV Convention, the move to establish a Single European Market by 1992 and the preparations for the eighth session of UNCTAD. He said that all these events constitute challenges which Africa must prepare to face in the 1990s and beyond. Consequently, it was imperative for Africa to start the 1990s determined not to repeat the bitter experience of the eighties. In this connection Mr. Tchouta-Moussa underscored the timeliness of declaring the 1990s a "Trade Development Decade for Africa".

11. Mr. Tchouta-Moussa called upon African countries to take timely steps in the preparatory process towards economic integration in Africa and the establishment of the African common market as time was not on Africa's side. These efforts, he said, should be supplemented by the intensification of South-South co-operation, including intra-African trade while at the same time, consolidating the gains in trade relations with traditional trading partners.

12. Mr. Tchouta-Moussa concluded by stressing the need to implement the STRRAGAT expeditiously, since it was particularly intended to support the contribution of the trade sector in the process of the region's overall development. He expressed his strong conviction that Africa should strive to march strongly towards its future with a view to building economic structures that would lead to the realization of its enormous potential of natural and human

resources. In his view such action would be a better way of shedding away the hopeless image of the region being a permanent underdog of the world economy.

13. Addressing the Conference, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the OAU, Mr. Dirar, Director of EDECO surveyed Africa's economic crisis and mentioned among others, the external debt burden, collapse of commodity prices including commodity agreements and the unconcluded multilateral trade negotiations of the Uruguay Round under GATT.

14. Mr. Dirar also surveyed the trends in global economic order that were bound to have tremendous impact on the African economies. He cited the integrating processes like Europe after 1992, USA/Canada/Mexico Trade Agreements, the Pacific Rim, and Latin America.

15. He then reminded participants of the work that had already been accomplished as a result of the collaborative efforts of the OAU, ECA and ADB towards the signing of the Treaty launching the African Economic Community in Abuja, Nigeria scheduled for June 1991. Consequently, the signing of the Treaty would be a turning point in Africa's economic history. It would demonstrate the commitment of African Governments towards the promotion of inter-African co-operation for survival.

16. In this regard, the representative of the OAU pointed out that several institutions had already been established at subregional level and included, ECOWAS, PTA, ECCAS the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) which could be used effectively to evolve into the African continental Common Market, for the promotion of intra-African trade.

17. He went on also to inform the Conference that the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair was scheduled to be held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, from 2 to 10 September 1992.

18. Finally he reminded the Conference of the recently published Fraser Group's Report on African commodity problems, which was examined by the UN General Assembly as a result of which resolution A/45/L.21/Rev.1 of 14 December 1990 was adopted. He further informed the Conference of the African Common Position on the Fraser Group's Report and urged that these documents be taken into consideration during discussions of the commodity issue.

### **Attendance**

19. The Conference was attended by the following African countries: Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

20. The following Organizations attended as observers: The Organization of African Unity (OAU), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African Countries (PTA), the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO).

**Election of the bureau (Agenda item 2)**

21. The meeting elected the following countries to constitute its bureau:

Chairman	Zambia
First Vice-Chairman	Burundi
Second Vice-Chairman	Namibia
Third Vice-Chairman	Burkina Faso
Fourth Vice-Chairman	Morocco
Rapporteur	Tanzania

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND PROGRAMME OF WORK (Agenda item 3)**

22. The Conference adopted the following agenda and programme of work.

- (1) Opening of the meeting
- (2) Election of officers
- (3) Adoption of Agenda and programme of work
- (4) Consideration of the report of the meeting of experts
- (5) Consideration of Africa's position on issues to be negotiated within the Group of 77 and at UNCTAD VIII (deferred)
- (6) Any other business

- (7) Dates and venue of the next Conference
- (8) Adoption of the report and closure of the Conference

**Consideration of the Report of the Meeting of Experts**  
**(Agenda item 4)**

23. The Chairman of the eleventh session of the Conference of Ministers of Trade invited the Chairman (Zambia) of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts meeting to introduce his report. The Chairman of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts in introducing document E/ECA/TRADE/91/11 (report of the meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts), accordingly highlighted the main items of the deliberations of the experts. He also mentioned the various recommendations that the Experts had made to the Conference. The Rapporteur (Tanzania) of the meeting of experts introduced four draft resolutions that are annexed to this report.

24. The ministers took note of some of the experiences that in the past had rendered void well-formulated trade strategies because they lacked appropriate financing mechanisms, especially those geared to supporting the trade sector. Consequently the ministers adopted the following recommendations:

- (a) studies to be undertaken by member countries and other institutions to assess the implementation of the LPA and the findings thereof, to be periodically submitted to the Conference of African Ministers of Trade;
- (b) comparative intra-African trade studies be undertaken identifying available goods to be traded between the various subregions, including intensification of supply and demand surveys to explore intra-African trade opportunities;
- (c) at national level, associating the people with LPA and the Strategies in order to ensure their effective and accelerated implementation. In addition, a time-table should be set up at national, sub-regional and regional levels for the implementation of the strategies and periodic reports provided by the member States and the secretariat;
- (d) sub-regional economic integration communities are being urged to expand and intensify the implementation of their programmes relating to trade liberalization, promotion and facilitation;
- (e) ECA, donor countries, specialized agencies, multilateral and international financial institutions are called upon to give due consideration in their future activities and

in implementing the provisions of Chapter VII of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos and, also as articulated and elaborated in the Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and Beyond, especially those relating to trade financing.

25. Under sub-item "impact of pricing, marketing and distribution of staple crops on domestic trade", the Conference adopted the following recommendations:

- (a) African Governments were urged to reduce state control of trading enterprises; as such control is essentially monopolistic and stifles initiative. Governments were therefore urged to ensure and adopt flexible approaches towards trade activities, particularly in terms of programming, import control, protection of local production and control of price fluctuations;
- (b) African Governments were also urged to vigorously pursue food self-sufficiency through improved farming methods and other measures including protecting local supply of food commodities in the initial stages and through the promotion of import substitution;
- (c) governments to develop the physical infrastructure, improve collection centres in the rural areas and set up mechanisms for disseminating marketing information to enable economic agents to benefit from opportunities offered.

26. Under sub-item on "integration of women in the modern business sector, both formal and informal sectors" the Conference amended the title by deleting the words "modern business" by inserting the word "trade" to read "Integration of women in trade both formal and informal sectors".

27. The Conference reiterated the objectives of both the formal and informal sectors in the respective economies. It therefore stressed the need of creating an enabling economic climate for both the formal and informal sectors in which women entrepreneurs would be able to make their deserved contribution to the growth of their respective national economies. Consequently, the Conference adopted the following recommendations:

- (a) adequate support to be provided to women in trade in order to ameliorate social, economic and cultural constraints that have been major impediments to women's effective participation in the trade sector, including small-scale and agro-industries. Furthermore, mechanisms for the co-ordination of the fragmented entrepreneurial skills, both for rural and urban women, require to be vigorously pursued. Similarly, the training and upgrading of skills deserve immediate attention;

- (b) small-scale women traders, business enterprises, small-holder and medium-scale farmers and producers of marketable goods, including handicrafts should be provided with an enabling environment by governments and concerned organizations;
- (c) viable projects should be identified by governments and other bodies to enable women to develop self-sufficient profitable enterprises through good management studies, science and technology;
- (d) women should be encouraged to establish financial cooperative enterprises with a view to "pooling" their resources for investment.

28. Under sub-item on the "impact of unrecorded transborder trade on the informal sector" the conference adopted the following recommendations:

- (a) in order to curtail the adverse effects of unrecorded transborder trade, governments were urged to promote investments in the production of those products traded across the borders and provide incentives that could increase the production of food and essential commodities to satisfy internal demand;
- (b) marketing boards and co-operative systems to be stream-lined and made more efficient in the collection of products and timely payment to producers at collection or delivery points;
- (c) transport networks and storage facilities should be improved to facilitate efficient internal management and distribution of goods;
- (d) where feasible, fiscal, tariff and customs rules and regulations should be harmonized;
- (e) efforts be made to decentralize the licensing system to border areas in order to encourage traders, resident in those areas to use official trade channels and where feasible, the border customs posts should be increased and/or strengthened;
- (f) customs administration should be improved by providing adequate facilities to customs officials to carry out their functions efficiently and effectively;
- (g) joint Border Commissions should be encouraged and strengthened and made to meet regularly to deal with transborder trade issues.



29. The Conference took note on the report on the preparations for the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair to be held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe from 2 to 10 September 1992. It also took note of the offers made by the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire to host the Seventh (1996) and the Eighth (2000) All Africa Trade Fairs respectively.

30. The conference took note of the progress report on the establishment of the African Economic Community but expressed concern at the scantiness of information on such a very important item. The Conference however reiterated the importance of maintaining linkages between the various economic communities in line with the decision of the OAU Ministerial meeting.

31. The representative of the OAU informed the Conference that the secretariats of OAU, ECA and ADB were working on various protocols and were aware of the need to maintain linkages between the regional and the subregional economic communities on the one hand, with the African Economic Community on the other hand. Furthermore, that work undertaken by the secretariats had been made available as background information to the preceding meeting of experts.

32. In considering the issue of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organization (AATPO), the Conference pointed out that an appropriate subtitle was necessary to separate it from the progress report on the African Economic Community. Nevertheless, the conference reiterated the plight facing AATPO, including other ECA and OAU sponsored institutions. The Conference therefore called upon the member States to take a very serious look at many of the causes of the problem notwithstanding the need to rationalize the viability of existing institutions.

33. By way of assisting the Conference gain a better appreciation of the issue of proliferation of African institutions, the secretariat drew the attention of the Conference to studies already undertaken that had been reported to the ECA Conference of Ministers in Tripoli in 1990 on the rationalization of these institutions. The Conference therefore noted that as matters stood, it was up to member States to take needed action to resolve the problem raised, including that of proliferation of these institutions.

34. On the issues and implications of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) within GATT, the Lome IV Convention and Europe after 1992, the conference expressed concern with the trend of negotiations in general and, in particular about what had transpired in Brussels in December 1990 where African countries were not only ignored but also marginalized. Hence, the conference's appreciation of the outcome of the Arusha Brainstorming Meeting and its recommendations which it endorsed as pertinent. Consequently, the Ministers adopted the following recommendations:

- (a) African delegations in Geneva were called upon to give priority and intensify coordination of mechanisms on Uruguay Round issues pursuant to para 49 of the Strategies (Doc. E/ECA/TRADE/89/25/Rev.5) and to take joint initiatives with a view to overcoming problems of lack of transparency;
- (b) the UNCTAD/UNDP Project RAF/87/157 "Support to Africa in the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations and to the external sector of African countries" which had been initiated through the ECA Ministers of Trade Conference be called upon to provide maximum technical support to this process;
- (c) the UNDP be further urged to increase its financial support to Project RAF/87/157 above, so that the project could effectively carry out its mandate until the end of the Uruguay Round and thereafter, to assist in the implementation of the results of the Round, including in the formulation of trade policy reforms aimed at increasing African countries' share in world trade.

35. A decision was also reached by the conference in respect of the above requiring the OAU to contact the Director-General of GATT to ensure African countries were invited to take part in all negotiations and to impress upon him that the non-transparent manner in which the negotiations had been held had marginalized Africa's interests. The Conference wanted the state of affairs to be reversed in order to achieve balanced and acceptable results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. In this regard, the Conference asked that the matter be brought to the attention of the OAU Council of Ministers and subsequently the OAU Summit in Abuja in June 1991.

36. The Conference reviewed trends, policies and prospects for trade in primary commodities and enhancing Africa's export performance. The Conference expressed a need to explore ways and means of reversing the current negative trends in which Africa remained exclusively a primary commodity exporter. The conference called upon the African countries to intensify efforts towards increasing production and processing of those commodities which were hitherto traditionally exported in unprocessed form. Similarly that appropriate financing mechanisms should be instituted to support those activities.

37. The Conference also observed that discussions and recommendations relating to the issue of prospects for commodities should take into account what had been achieved in other sectoral programmes which were supportive to what is envisaged to be achieved in the area under consideration. For instance the First United Nations Industrial Development Decade for Africa and the First United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa. With these comments, the Conference took note of the report.

38. Under sub-item on "evaluation of Africa's prospects for trade in commodities and capabilities for increasing export earnings through processing and semi-processing of primary commodities" the Conference called for:

- (a) the need to include in the studies aspects covering compensatory financing for export earnings shortfall, since primary commodities face price instability;
- (b) the need to show possible linkages between Africa's commodity export position with those of the Lome IV Convention and the benefits from the Common Fund;
- (c) the need for a multisectoral approach involving linkages between and among industry, agriculture, transport and communication.

**Consideration of Africa's position on issues to be negotiated within the Group of 77 and at UNCTAD VIII (Agenda item 5)**

39. The Conference had already decided to defer consideration of agenda item 5 in the light of a recommendation made to it by the intergovernmental group of experts. In considering the report of the experts, the conference had also touched on the merits and demerits of holding yet another conference of Ministers of Trade so close to the one it was having. Some delegations expressed the view that perhaps it would have been more appropriate to mandate the African Ambassadors in Geneva in collaboration with the Bureau of the Conference to deal with these matters.

40. At the request of the Chairman and in addition to what many other delegates had stated in support of having an African regional meeting on the subject under discussion, the secretariat provided yet more background information to the conference. In particular that the current session was statutory as decided by the Conference itself when it decided to meet at two yearly intervals; that the session that adopted the strategies had been "extra-ordinary" as demanded by the Tenth Conference; and that very few African countries had embassies in Geneva and therefore there was a necessity for the African region to meet to adopt its own position prior to participating in the 7th Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 at which developing regions will have to harmonize their position to be defended during UNCTAD VIII.

41. The Conference resolved to accept the recommendation of the experts meeting that the decision of date and venue be left to be determined by the Chairman in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers and the Bureau of the Standing Committee as well as the Chairman of the African Group in Geneva, assisted by the ECA and OAU secretariats.

**Implementation of the Strategies**

42. The Conference reviewed further the provisions of the Strategies for Revitalization of Africa's Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and Beyond as commended in the opening statements. It reiterated the urgency of timely implementation of the provisions articulated and elaborated therein by its extra-ordinary session that met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in December 1990. The Conference concluded its debate on this issue by inviting Governments, intergovernmental institutions, specialized agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors to take appropriate action with a view to establishing mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of the Strategies.

**Any other business (Agenda item 6)**

43. Under this agenda item the delegate of Malawi paid special tribute to the bureau of the Expert Group for preparing an excellent report to the eleventh session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade. He also paid tribute to the Chairman of the Ministerial meeting for the manner in which he conducted the deliberations of the session. However the Malawi delegate expressed concern regarding the late receipt by his delegation of the experts' report which made it difficult for his delegation to have made extensive and constructive comments during its adoption. He urged the secretariat to ensure that in future the report should be distributed in good time to enable participants to study them fully and constructively.

44. Other delegations called for the need to rationalise existing intergovernmental institutions to avoid proliferation and overlap of functions and objectives. Some delegations were of the view that such proliferation and overlap was not cost effective and may have contributed to financial difficulties being experienced by certain African intergovernmental institutions including the Association of African Trade Promotion Organisation (AATPO). An appeal was however made to give necessary financial support to AATPO to enable the Organization to perform its trade promotional role.

**Date and Venue of next Conference (Agenda item 7)**

45. The delegate of Namibia expressed gratitude on behalf of his Government for the opportunity of participating as an independent country for the first time in the eleventh regular session of Conference of Ministers of Trade. He expressed the hope that his country's participation would contribute further to the overall programmes geared towards social, economic and trade development of the African region.

46. Furthermore, he informed the Conference that his country would be honoured to host the 12th session of the Conference of Ministers scheduled for 1993 and therefore renewed his country's commitment to play its modest role in the common cause of Africa.

47. The Conference accepted the offer of the Government of Namibia by acclamation and therefore decided that the twelfth session will be held in 1993 in Namibia.

**Adoption of the report and closure of the conference**  
**(Agenda item 8).**

48. The Conference adopted its report as amended. The Chairman then thanked all the delegations and the secretariat and the support servicing staff before declaring the Conference closed at 2320 hours.

## ANNEX I

### RESOLUTION ON THE STRATEGIES FOR REVITALIZATION, RECOVERY AND GROWTH OF AFRICA'S TRADE IN THE 1990s AND BEYOND

#### The Eleventh Conference African Ministers of Trade

Having considered the report of the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting and the relevant provisions of the Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and Beyond,

Referring to Chapter IX of the Strategies concerning the mechanisms for the implementation, monitoring and follow-up which call upon African Governments, International Organizations, International Development Finance Institutions as well as bilateral and multilateral donors to take all the necessary measures for the successful implementation of the strategies,

Convinced that the successful implementation of the Strategies depends largely on the formulation of specific strategies at all levels,

Aware of the major roles which should be played by the implementing, monitoring and follow-up agencies,

1. CALLS UPON African Governments, ECA, UNDP, International Development Finance Institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors to accord high priority to the successful implementation of the strategies;
2. REQUESTS the Executive Secretary of the ECA in collaboration with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to submit the Strategies to the deliberations of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Conference of African Ministers

Responsible for Economic Development and Planning (Addis Ababa, 9-13 May 1991);

3. INVITES Governments, Intergovernmental institutions, specialized agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors to take appropriate action with a view to establishing mechanisms for implementation and monitoring of the Strategies at national, subregional and regional levels and to report at every regular session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade.
4. RECOMMENDS that the orientation paper for the UNDP Fifth-Cycle Inter-country programme for Africca should see to it that the "Trade Strategies" are properly reflected.

## ANNEX II

### RESOLUTION ON TRADE FINANCING AND ITS ROLE IN THE EXPANSION OF DOMESTIC AND INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE

The Eleventh Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade,

Concerned at the low level of export diversification that has been achieved in Africa during the last two decades, and at the sharp fall in Africa's share in world trade as well as the slow expansion of domestic and intra-African trade,

Recalling the provisions of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos relating to Trade and Finance and the provisions of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990 (APPER) on issues pertaining to the role of trade financing in enhancing African trade,

Reaffirming the provisions of Chapter VII of the Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and Beyond on the importance of trade financing in promoting domestic trade and intra-African trade,

Further considering that trade financing forms an integral part of the Strategies for Revitalization, Recovery and Growth of Africa's Trade in the 1990s and Beyond,

Mindful that in the past many well-formulated trade strategies failed to materialize because lack of financing has been one of the major bottlenecks in the revitalization of African trade,



- 1     **CALLS UPON**       donor countries, specialized agencies, multilateral and international financial institutions to support member States in the implementation of the strategies.
  
- 2     **FURTHER CALLS UPON** the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa in collaboration with other institutions such as UNCTAD, ITC, UNDP and specialized agencies to intensify their efforts and activities in assisting member States to implement the Strategies especially those relating to trade financing. Additionally, to assist in carrying out studies on the role of specialized institutions in promoting trade, the importance of pre-and-post export financing in enhancing trade. Furthermore the studies should also examine the impact of suppliers' credit, with a view to increasing Africa's export competitiveness, finance in developing linkages between the production base and export base, and the significance of promoting domestic insurance institutions in trade promotion.

Resolution on the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade  
Negotiations

The Eleventh conference of African Ministers of Trade.

Having considered the report of the Intergovernmental Experts Group meeting on the "Review of recent developments in Africa's international economic and trade relations",

Gravely concerned about the deteriorating international economic environment, in particular the increasing use of protectionist and trade distorting measures by developed countries,

Recalling the recent decision of the Trade Negotiations Committee to resume the Uruguay Round negotiations which had been suspended at the Brussels Ministerial Meeting of December 1990,

Noting that the outcome so far of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral trade negotiations under GATT were not satisfactory to African countries and that the commitments made in the Punta del Este Declaration and Mid Term Review have not been respected by the developed countries,

Deeply concerned that issues of crucial interest to African countries have been marginalized and that results emerging in the negotiations would entail serious losses for African countries, and have a negative impact on their economic and social development,

Reiterating their deep concern expressed at the Brussels Ministerial Meeting about lack of transparency in the negotiations and the need to be fully associated with the negotiating process in the final decisive phase of the Round,

Conscious of the need for strengthened and intensified coordination among the African Ambassadors in Brussels, Geneva and other negotiating forums in the final stages of the negotiations.

1. Endorses the recommendations outlined by the African Brainstorming session on the Uruguay Round organized within the framework of UNCTAD/UNDP Project RAF/87/157 "Support to Africa in the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations and to the external sector of African countries" held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 12-13 April 1991;
2. Agrees that, for the duration of the Uruguay Round mechanisms should be established for an effective continuous coordination and exchange of views between policy makers at capitals and Geneva based negotiators to ensure results which protect our genuine interests as stipulated in the Ministerial Declaration, Part B paras iv, v, vi and vii;

3. Agrees further that key questions facing African countries in the Uruguay Round should be brought to the attention of the OAU summit meeting to be held in June, 1991 in Nigeria;
4. Requests the ECA and UNCTAD secretariats in collaboration with OAU to assist this group to consult on the issues surrounding the Uruguay Round of negotiations with a view at arriving at a harmonized and concerted African position;
5. Recommends that the forthcoming OAU Summit Meeting addresses the challenges facing African countries in the final stage of the Uruguay Round;
6. Requests the UNDP/UNCTAD/ECA to continue to provide maximum financial and technical support to the Project RAF/87/157 in this process.

**Draft Resolution on the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair**

The Conference of African Ministers of Trade, meeting in its Eleventh Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa - Ethiopia, from 18 to 19 April 1991.

**Having noted** the contents of document EDECO/TD/12/1786.91 entitled, Progress Report on Preparations for the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair,

**Hearing in mind** the OAU Council of Ministers resolution, CM/Res. 127(IX) institutionalizing the All-Africa Trade Fairs and the commitment of African Governments to launch a permanent "Buy African Goods" campaign within the framework of the All-Africa Trade Fair in accordance with the Lagos Plan of Action, adopted by the Second Extra-ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU April 1980,

**Recalling** its decision taken at its 8th Session in Brazzaville - Congo, to accept the offer of Zimbabwe to host the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair,

**Having noted** that in accordance with the decision of the Government of Zimbabwe, the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair is to take place in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe from 2 to 10 September 1992.

Notes with appreciation the efforts being deployed by the Government of Zimbabwe and Members of the Organising Committee to ensure a successful outcome of the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair, especially to improve upon the business and commercial impact of the Fair,

Further takes note of the date for the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair and urges all Member States to avoid fixing dates that are likely to clash with the date 2 to 10 September 1992;

1. INVITES all Member States to mobilise the private sector to prepare adequately to participate actively in the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair;
2. URGES the Secretariat of the OAU to deploy all efforts to secure financial and technical resources from the European Development Fund of the EEC under the Lome IV Convention;
3. URGES ALSO other institutions, specialized agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors to extend their assistance to the African region towards successful mounting of the African regional trade fairs;

4. **CALLS ON** the Organising Committee to endeavour to increase the commercial and business impact of the Fair by inter alia ensuring that adequate time is allocated to business contacts and the holding of the Investment Forum;
5. **REQUESTS** the Secretary-General of the OAU in collaboration with all relevant agencies and the Organising Committee to undertake an evaluation of the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair, and submit a report on its outcome.