



54970

UN

**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**



Distr.
GENERAL
E/ECA/CM.12/13
11 February 1986
Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Seventh meeting of the Technical
Preparatory Committee of the
Whole

Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon
7 to 14 April 1986

Item 9 of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-first session of the Commission/
Twelfth meeting of the Conference
of Ministers

Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon
17 to 21 April 1986

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

PROMOTION OF TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND INTEGRATION:
REGIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL
CO-OPERATION ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

* E/ECA/TPCW.7/1
E/ECA/CM.12/1

Introduction

1. During the period under review, the secretariat has continued to make significant strides in promoting further technical co-operation (TCDC), economic co-operation (ECDC) and integration at the subregional, regional and interregional levels. In this respect ECA, at the nineteenth session of the Commission held in Addis Ababa in May 1984, adopted resolution 522 (XIX) on strengthening subregional and regional co-operation. ECOSOC resolution 1983/66, adopted in 1983, inter alia, requested the Secretary General of the United Nations to take appropriate steps to ensure co-operation and co-ordination in the preparation of relevant programmes and activities of the regional commissions for interregional economic and technical co-operation among developing countries. In implementing this resolution, ECA has stepped up interregional co-operation activities, and in doing so has collaborated with other regional commissions and institutions, intergovernmental bodies and the Group of 77. ECA has also been instrumental in the promotion of interregional co-operation between developing countries of Africa and other developing countries in Latin America and the Asia region.

I. REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND INTEGRATION

2. ECA continued to intensify its efforts to promote cooperation among its member countries, to strengthen their capacities for co-operation and also to help them identify and formulate new operational activities or incorporate cooperation elements in existing projects.

3. ECA continued to place high priority on the activities of the five United Nations Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) servicing the five subregions of ECA and with headquarters in Lusaka (Zambia), Gisenyi (Rwanda), Yaounde (Cameroon), Niamey (Niger) and Tangier (Morocco), which constitute the main instruments under the aegis of the Commission, for promoting and sustaining co-operation and integration in the region. An important aspect of the work of the MULPOCs is the strengthening of the major subregional economic groupings such as the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) among member States of the Lusaka-based MULPOC, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) uniting the Yaounde- and Gisenyi-based MULPOCs, and the efforts of the Niamey-based MULPOC to assist the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In this connection, the ECA secretariat commissioned a study entitled "Proposals for strengthening economic integration in West Africa" which was published in 1984. This report has since been discussed at special meetings of the chief executives of the West African intergovernmental organizations, of MULPOC ministers, ECOWAS experts, ECOWAS ministers and Heads of State and Government.

4. Institutional and/or programme support for subregional and regional institutions under ECA auspices continued to be an important element in its work programme. Among these institutions are the projected African Monetary Fund, the African Association of Trade Promotion Organizations, the African

Regional Organization for Standardization, the proposed Trade and Development Bank of Eastern and Southern Africa, and the Federation of African Chambers of Commerce. A technical study on the establishment of the projected African Monetary Fund has been discussed and adopted by the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts from Ministries of Finance and Central Banks held in April 1985. The Federation of African Chambers of Commerce, called for under the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos, was established at a meeting held in Addis Ababa in September 1984.

5. At the request of the Lusaka-based MULPOC Council of Ministers which was concerned about co-operation in the field of trade and development among the PTA member States, ECA, in collaboration with the ADB and the African Centre for Monetary Studies, prepared a technical study on a Trade and Development Bank for Eastern and Southern Africa. This study and a draft charter of the Bank based on it were approved.

6. Apart from its catalytic role in promoting TCDC/ECDC through its support for the institutions it sponsors, ECA has also assisted its member States directly by participating in particular TCDC/ECDC-oriented activities during the period under review. For instance, a number of missions and studies have been carried out to promote co-operation in trade and production in the field of food and agriculture and to establish food security systems among countries of the Tangier-based MULPOC, countries of the Lusaka-based MULPOC and of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries. During the period under review, a multidisciplinary team from ECA prepared, at the request of the member States of the Community, a draft fiveyear plan for the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries for consideration and adoption by the Community. Also, ECA completed a feasibility study on the establishment of an agricultural commodity exchange for Eastern and Southern Africa.

II. INTERREGIONAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

7. Activities aimed at assisting in the promotion of interregional TCDC/ECDC activities are carried out mainly in the context of co-operation with other regional commissions and the Group of 77. A concrete example is the process of consultations initiated by ECA and ECLAC to translate into action the proposals adopted at the Joint Meeting of Governmental Experts from Africa and Latin America on TCDC/ECDC, which took place at ECA headquarters, Addis Ababa during 1982. The Addis Ababa action-oriented proposals for interregional TCDC/ECDC are focussed on trade, manpower development, science and technology.

8. Follow-up consultations between ECA and ECLAC have led to the preparation of joint TCDC/ECDC programme projects in the field of mining and the exchange of draft proposals for an interregional project on trade promotion between a selected group of countries from the two regions.

9. Other examples relate to the co-operation in which ECA is involved with India and China in various fields. The Group of 77 has increasingly been co-ordinating its activities with the regional commissions. ECA organized a meeting on surveillance and information on commodity prices and raw materials on behalf

of, and at the request of, the Group of 77 in New York. This activity was designed to help developing countries to design methods to correct the distorted information given by some developed countries about the situation prevailing in international commodity markets. During the review period, ECA participated in the meetings of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Co-ordination Committee which aims at strengthening co-operation and co-ordination between the various chapters of the Group of 77 and the United Nations system for the implementation of the Caracas Programme of Action. ECA has also participated fully in the meeting of the high-level committee to review the progress made in implementing the tasks entrusted to the United Nations development system by the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for promoting and implementing TCDC among developing countries held in 1985.

10. ECA hosted meetings of officials and executive secretaries of the regional commissions on the promotion of ECDC/TCDC in Addis Ababa in February 1985. The meetings approved specific project proposals for the promotion of interregional TCDC/ECDC activities. The lead role in the implementation of each of the projects is assigned to a particular commission in cooperation with other commissions and United Nations agencies and entities. ECA was given the lead role in respect of the following project proposals:

- (a) Development of low-cost housing construction material;
- (b) Fertilizers and pesticides;
- (c) Containerization and multimodal transport;
- (d) Employment opportunities for women and youth in rural areas;
- (e) Promotion of Afro-Arab trade.

11. The officials and executive secretaries of the regional commissions met again in Geneva in July 1985 to work out in more detail the modalities for the implementation of these project proposals, on the basis of preliminary drafts that were prepared by each commission.

12. To strengthen Afro-Arab co-operation, ECA is undertaking studies on ways and means of improving trade relations and increasing financial flows between Africa and the Arab countries. When the studies are completed, it is expected that Afro-Arab meetings of experts and ministers of trade will be convened to map out a course of action. ECA has participated in a number of meetings on Afro-Arab co-operation including those of the Standing Committee on Afro-Arab Co-operation convened by the League of Arab States (LAS) and the OAU. These meetings were followed by an exchange of visits between ECA and LAS resulting in the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two secretariats in 1984. Since then ECA has submitted various projects to LAS for possible financing by Arab Funds.