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**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

**REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR HUMAN RESOURCES PLANNING,
DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION**

(Africa Hall, Addis Ababa, 22-23 November, 1991)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The ECA Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization was established by Commission Resolution 389(XV) of 12 April 1980. The broad mandate of the Conference is the coordination and rationalization of human resources development and utilization policies at the national, sub-regional and regional levels; the harmonization of activities in the planning, development and utilization of human resources; monitoring of performance, problem areas, policies and programmes in the field of human resources; and providing appropriate guidelines as required.
2. This was the fourth of the Conference's three-yearly meetings. The work of the Conference is undertaken in the inter-sessional years by a Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten, whose mandate is to monitor the performance of the human resources development and utilization indicators, as well as the implementation of policies, programmes, strategies and plans.
3. The Fourth Meeting of the Conference had as its theme, **AFRICA'S HUMAN RESOURCES AGENDA FOR THE 1990s AND BEYOND**. This theme was chosen as a logical progression from the Conference's preoccupation, at its Third Meeting which was **HUMAN RESOURCES FOR AFRICAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT**, and in order to focus on the medium-to long-term human resources requirements for socio-economic transformation and development.
4. The Meeting of the Ministers was preceded by a Meeting of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten on 21 November 1991, and a Meeting of the Technical Committee of Officials from 18 to 20 November 1991.
5. In addition to the general debate, the Conference considered and adopted reports submitted to it by the Technical Committee of Officials and the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten.

II. ATTENDANCE

6. In attendance at the Conference, were representatives from Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Cameroun, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
7. The following agencies and organizations of the United Nations system were represented at the Conference: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); International Labour Organization (ILO); United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF); World Health Organization (WHO); United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)
8. International, intergovernmental and regional organizations and institutions represented at the meeting were: Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI); Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA); Organization of African Unity (OAU); African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE); the

Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

III. OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

9. The out-going Chairman of the Conference, His Excellency Dr. Hussein S. Abu Salih, Minister of Social Development of the Republic of the Sudan, opened the meeting. On behalf of the delegates, he thanked the Transitional Government of Ethiopia for the hospitality accorded to delegates since their arrival in Ethiopia, the Secretariat of ECA for the excellent manner in which it had carried out the substantive and other preparations for the Conference and all other organizations and institutions who had contributed to the Conference.
10. Man, he said, was ordained by God to be the centre of all socio-economic development. All should co-operate to harmonize their policies, plans and programmes to promote the centrality of man in the development process. He recalled that at Khartoum, the Conference had called for a human-centered approach to socio-economic development to be adopted, and for the top most priority to be accorded to the development of human resources. Five areas had also been identified for urgent action viz: the strengthening of the labour force, placing greater emphasis on the human dimension of development, reducing the negative effects of structural adjustment programmes on human development, combatting the brain drain and improving the management of the African economy.
11. The out-going Chairman noted that over the years since Khartoum, African governments had redoubled their efforts to implement these decisions. Among the many laudable actions they took, were the creation or strengthening of human resources planning, development and utilization institutions, actions to improve the participation of women in development, a greater support to rural development, the promotion of popular participation in development etc. These efforts, he said, were reinforced by those of the international community, in particular the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on human resources development and utilization which produced for use by African governments and the international community, a Regional Framework for Human Resources Development and Utilization.
12. In spite of these efforts, however, challenges continued to present themselves, which called for the search for realistic solutions. Among these daunting challenges were the massive increase in unemployment, the serious drops in incomes and the spread of poverty. These challenges which, he said, should be faced squarely by the Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development Utilization, were being compounded by a continuously hostile external economic environment, and the serious reductions of resource flows to Africa.
13. He called on the international community to increase its assistance to African countries to strengthen the planning, development and utilization of their human resources. Equally, he called upon African governments to redouble their efforts towards this end, bearing in mind, that improvements in these areas could only be brought about through the efforts of the Africans themselves.

14. The out-going Chairman ended his statement by congratulating Africa and Egypt for the recent election by the Security Council of the UN, for the first time, of one of its sons, Dr. Boutros B. Ghali, Deputy Prime Minister of Egypt, to the high office of Secretary-General of the United Nations. He then called upon H.E. Dr. Negassa Gidada, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, to make a statement.
15. In his statement, the Minister welcomed the delegates, on behalf of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia and on his own behalf, to the Fourth Conference of Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization which was being convened at a time when his country was ushering in a new era of democracy and peace, and of the unfolding of profound changes throughout the world.
16. He observed that Africa was entering the 1990s with a persistent socio-economic crisis characterized by a crushing debt burden, unfavourable terms of trade, an unfavourable human development situation, absence of skilled manpower, lack of peace and stability, etc. The theme of the Conference, "Africa's Human Resources Agenda, for the 1990s and Beyond" should thus be taken within the context of the socio-economic crisis, because Africa's resolution of the crisis must be based on strategic action programmes that give prominence to the human dimension. This, he recalled, was the message of Khartoum. Development strategies, plans and programmes, including structural adjustment programmes, should strengthen human and social development, not dislodge them.
17. He said that the democratization of society and the maintenance of peace and security in the region were the other aspects of development that required immediate attention. If military expenditures were eating up too much of the GNP, then Africa would only be paying lip-service to the cause of human development, since this wastage of resources could only weaken efforts to bring about human development on the continent. Equally, development in general and human resources development in particular would be inconceivable without the participation of the people in the decision making process. Therefore, the wall that separates the people from the government should be brought down, and respect for human rights, individual freedom and democracy should be made to flourish.
18. Referring to the situation in his country, the Minister said that the widespread misery in Ethiopia had been caused by three decades of military confrontation. National energies had been dissipated, mutual distrust had been created and irreparable damage have been inflicted on the economy. After decades of civil war and violence that cost millions of lives, the peoples of Ethiopia were more resolved than ever before to create peace in their country.
19. The democratization process that had been set in motion would ensure a development process that offers the people a potent weapon to mobilize their resources and direct their energies towards building a democratic order. Respect for basic human rights would chart out a path for the pursuit of prosperity and for the restoration of human dignity.

20. He said that a new economic policy had been formulated for the acceleration of the recovery and reconstruction of the Ethiopian economy. Account had also been taken of the need to break the cycle of famine and to lay the ground for sustainable development in the long run.
21. The Minister said that the new foreign policy of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia was based on the principles of mutual respect for the sovereignty and equality of states, non-interference in the affairs of others and the promotion of mutual interest.
22. Ethiopia, he said, was in the process of repairing the damages of war. The rehabilitation of demobilized soldiers and displaced persons was fully underway with the assistance of the international community. Attempts were also being made to repatriate thousands of Ethiopians who had left the country for political reasons.
23. Finally, turning to the Conference's agenda, the Minister observed that the items to be considered were pertinent to the task at hand. He expressed his confidence that the deliberations would bear fruit and would contribute to the search for lasting solutions to Africa's economic and social problems. He assured the Conference that his government would do all in its power to fully implement the recommendations emanating from the deliberations..
24. He expressed his appreciation to ECA for the effort it had made to organize the Conference, wished the delegates success in their deliberations, and a pleasant stay in Addis Ababa.
25. The out-going Chairman then called upon the representative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Pascal Gayama to make a statement.
26. The OAU representative welcomed delegates on behalf of the Secretary-General, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim. He congratulated the Acting Executive Secretary of ECA on his new appointment and wished him success in his mission. On behalf of the OAU he joined the outgoing Chairman in congratulating Africa on the choice of an African to be the new Secretary-General of the United Nations.
27. He said that since the last meeting of the Conference at Khartoum, many changes had taken place around the world. These changes should inspire Africa to take on the challenges and the opportunities that presented themselves in the 1990s and beyond. The theme of the Conference required that strategies should be charted out within the context of an African Economic Community.
28. He briefly reviewed the negative performance registered in the field of economic, social and human development and reiterated the call made by the African ministers of education and economic development at their meeting in Dakar, Senegal, in July 1991 for the strengthening of basic education and the improvement of the quality of education at all levels. Equally, he recalled the need expressed by the First

Congress of African Scientists for the strengthening of scientific and technological education for development in African countries.

29. He said that these reinforced the view that enough had been done by way of conceptualization and problem identification and the need now was to move to concrete actions on the ground in support of human development. The Regional Framework for Human Resources Development and Utilization of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Human Resources Development and Utilization was, he said, a step in the right direction. With initiatives such as these Africa could restore man to his rightful place in development.
30. Following these statements, Mr. Issa B.Y. Diallo, the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Acting Executive Secretary of ECA delivered the final address.
31. He welcomed the delegates and expressed his thanks to them for attending the meeting and to the Government of Ethiopia for the welcome and hospitality accorded to delegates.
32. He said that this was his first time to address the Conference since assuming office in August 1991, he felt honoured and privileged particularly when considering what the Conference had done over the years which had convinced him of the diligence, commitment and seriousness with which the Conference had confronted the issues and identified the problems standing in the way of Africa's development.
33. He said that it was largely due to the efforts of the Conference that the human dimension of Africa's development had been brought to the centre-piece of development and had ensured that development policies, programmes and strategies were greatly influenced by human considerations.
34. In this regard, he wanted to remind the delegates of this concern for the human-centred approach to recovery and development and that they had endorsed the Khartoum Declaration in 1988 hoping for a brighter future. But as the final review and appraisal of UN-PAAERD revealed this year, Africa's socio-economic conditions were still serious, recovery had eluded the continent and sustained development was not possible. He said that both the UN-PAAERD review and appraisal exercise and the ECA secretariat's periodic reports to the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten had confirmed that the majority of indicators of social and human development, i.e. education, health, nutrition, incomes, employment, literacy, etc. had continued to deteriorate.
35. He said that much of what the member States had done (in terms of restructuring and streamlining public services, removing or reducing subsidies to education, health, agriculture, transport, etc. reformulating and reviewing employment and wage policies, institutionalizing units or departments charged with human resources planning, development and utilization and promoting the integration of women in development) had been highly commendable and well meant. Yet in spite of these efforts, the effect on the well-being of people in Africa had been minimal. He stated that this was no time to falter, but rather to forge ahead with more

determination in pursuing this human-centred approach to African development to ensure that growth and development would be sustained and would be sustainable. Hence, he said, the theme of the Conference - Africa's Human Resources Agenda for the 1990's and Beyond - was timely as it fell squarely within the proposal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. He therefore hoped that member States would utilize the goodwill enshrined in the UN New Agenda to continue with a human-centred approach to Africa's development.

36. The UN Assistant Secretary-General then drew the attention of the Conference to the report of the Technical Committee of Experts for their consideration. He called upon the Ministers to seriously consider the recommendations contained in the Experts' report particularly the recommendations on the modalities for implementing the measures as pronounced in the Declaration of the 27th Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU on the Employment Crisis in Africa. In addition, he said that the Ministers should give due consideration to the three reports of the fourth, fifth and sixth meetings of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten regarding the strategies for dealing with the deteriorating conditions in respect of Africa's human resources development.

37. He concluded his statement by appealing to the Conference to translate their recommendations into action programmes in their countries to halt the continuous deterioration of conditions of human well-being, and to remove poverty and misery from the continent. ECA, he said, would do everything within its powers to support the efforts of member States in their endeavour to alleviate misery and forge ahead with socio-economic development.

38. He then wished the delegates all success in their deliberations.

IV. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU AND OF THE MINISTERIAL FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF TEN

39. The Conference elected the following Bureau:

Chairman	-	Swaziland
1st Vice-Chairman	-	Kenya
2nd Vice-Chairman	-	Senegal
3rd Vice-Chairman	-	Ethiopia
Rapporteur:	-	Sudan

40. The following member States were also elected to serve along with the Bureau, on the Conference's Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten: Malawi, Algeria, Rwanda, Togo, Nigeria.

V. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

41. The Conference adopted its Organization of Work and the following agenda:

- Election of the Bureau and of the Members of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten,
- Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of work,
- General Debate,
- Consideration of the Report of the Technical Committee of Experts,
- Consideration of the Reports of the 4th, 5th and 6th Meetings of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten,
- Any other Business,
- Date and Venue of the Next Meeting,
- Adoption of the Report and Closure of the Meeting.

VI. ACCOUNTS OF PROCEEDINGS

A. General Debate

42. The current Chairman of the Conference, the Honourable Minister of Labour of Swaziland, on taking over the chair, said that it was an honour to and a privilege for his delegation, and His Majesty's Government to have been elected to chair the Conference. He thanked the delegates for assigning to Swaziland this important responsibility. He also, on behalf of the delegates, thanked the out-going Chairman, Sudan for an excellent job done over the last three years. He noted with appreciation and satisfaction, the successful outcome of the meeting of the Technical Committee of Officials, the Committee of Ten, and the very efficient management of the meetings by the ECA Secretariat, including the quality of the technical papers that were presented.

43. He said that the work before the Committee was very challenging, and urged the delegates go give their might to accomplish the task ahead. Africa, he said, was faced with enormous and complex problems such as acute shortage of skilled manpower, drought, food deficiencies, poor management capacities, fast growing population, unemployment, brain drain etc. The analysis made by the officials had painted a very gloomy picture for the future. This situation called for all to work towards the search for solutions to the myriad problems of human development that had been identified. He then opened the floor for delegates to contribute to the general debate.

44. In his submission, the delegate from Uganda commended the ECA Secretariat for the competent manner in which it had handled the organization of the Conference and for the well-written and comprehensive documentation. He informed the Conference that Uganda had recognized the need to revive human resources planning and development and to incorporate them in the shortest time possible into the overall framework of socio-economic development. To this end, all the projects and programmes that were included in the Recovery and Development Plan (RDP) were assessed for relevance by their employment-generation potential. The

Government had requested the assistance of the ILO to field an interdisciplinary employment mission to gather and analyse information on the magnitude, patterns and trends of unemployment. The findings of the mission would provide the basis for the formulation of labour and employment policies. Already in the area of employment, efforts had been intensified to educate workers and minimize occupational hazards. Projects had been developed to assess the health hazards caused by pesticide handling, storage and usage on agricultural estates and to evaluate the safety and health of workers in the cotton industry with a view to instituting appropriate measures to protect workers against hazards.

45. He said that concerning manpower planning and staff development, one major constraint was the inadequacy of data on education, training, employment and unemployment. However, the 1988 National Manpower Survey had improved this situation in respect of employment data in the formal and informal sectors of the economy. On the recommendation of the survey a Workshop on human resources management policy, was held in October 1990 to analyse the deficiencies in the formulation of human resources management policies. The Workshop recommended the setting up of a National Manpower Council (NMC) charged with the responsibility for formulating and spearheading the national policy on human resources planning, development and utilization. The Workshop also strongly recommended action to urgently implement the decision to set up a National Manpower Information System (NMIS) to store, provide and disseminate information and data on manpower and employment issues under the aegis of the National Manpower Council.
46. With the assistance of the UNDP/ILO a further analysis of the findings of the National Manpower Survey Report of 1989 had been carried out. However, the analysis was completed only in two sectors: education and health. It would eventually cover industry, agriculture, commerce and construction. The findings would be translated into national education and training requirements.
47. Regarding staff development, he said that various measures had been instituted by the Government to improve the effectiveness of the civil service. These included the rehabilitation and modernization of the civil service training institutions - the Institute of Public Administration and the In-service Training Centre; the provision of greater support to vocational and technical training institutions in their pre- and in-service training programmes; the modernization of teaching facilities in polytechnics etc. Makerere University was also strengthened to enable it deliver tailor-made courses in such areas as economic policy and planning, and management. Two more new universities were also to be opened: Mbarara University for medicine, science and technology, and the Islamic University in Uganda at Mbale.
48. A report prepared by the government on Public Service Review and Re-organization recommended that the government improve its terms and conditions of service and pay a living wage to civil servants. This recommendation could perhaps be implemented only through the rationalization of functions and a reduction in the number of Ministries, i.e. a reduced civil service, so as to improve efficiency, reduce the brain drain and attract Ugandan professionals working abroad.

49. In the field of education, the government published a white paper, following the recommendations of the Education Policy Review Commission Report of 1989 to draw up a five-year education sector investment programme which would be made up of 39 inter-related projects. The policy framework for implementing the programme called for strategic interventions directed at four major areas: (i) increased access and; (ii) improved quality, efficiency and relevance; (iii) promotion of internal efficiency; and (iv) improved financial management.
50. He concluded his submission by stating that Uganda would endeavour to implement the recommendations emerging from the Conference so as to promote socio-economic recovery and transformation in the country.
51. In his contribution to the debate, the Egyptian delegate started by thanking the out-going Chairman and the delegates for the kind sentiments which they expressed on the occasion of the election of Dr. Boutros Ghali for the Office of the Secretary General of the UN. He then said that Egypt had left no stone unturned with regard to human resources planning, development and utilisation. A strategy had been adopted which was geared to the development of both the public and the private sectors. In pursuit of this strategy, Egypt was collaborating with donors and financial institutions to set up a social development fund to mitigate the adverse impact of SAP. The fund's total capital of 1.06 billion Egyptian pounds would retrain laid-off workers and assist them in setting up small-scale enterprises.
52. He said that Egypt attached great importance to basic, technical and vocational education and training and had succeeded in marrying theory with practice. A project had been developed to bring together trainers and users of manpower. A number of enterprises and corporate bodies had participated in the project which was to be extended to the public sector later. The objective was to identify the skill requirements in the private and public sectors so as to make education and training relevant to Egypt's overall socio-economic development needs.
53. In line with the recommendations of the Regional Framework for Human Resources Development and Utilisation, Egypt had set up a technical cooperation fund to assist other African countries in their efforts to develop the skilled manpower they require in different fields of development; as well as contribute to their training efforts.
54. The delegate of Senegal then took the floor. He said that his country had started to integrate population, education, training and employment issues in the national planning and development process. The new approach was called for by the adoption of a structural adjustment programme as well as the need to control the rapid population growth rates, promote the status and participation of women and special groups in society in the national development process, and improve the quality of life in the rural areas.
55. To address these new concerns, a triennial public investment plan had been put in place. This plan, he said, would be revised each year to assess progress being

made and success rate and to take the necessary measures to adjust programme direction and resource allocation priorities to suit the situation.

56. The new planning system had educational and employment models which sought to enable the authorities forecast the educational requirements in terms of infrastructure, facilities, the improvement of the quality of teaching staff, etc. Thus, the human resources development programme for the period 1991-1995 envisaged, among other things, improved literacy rates, the provision of vocational training at increased levels and more primary and basic education programmes. In line with the Khartoum Declaration, Senegal had made the human dimension the centre of the development planning process.

57. The delegate from Ghana started his submission by congratulating Swaziland on being elected Chairman of the Conference. He said that the importance of human resources development and effective utilization could not be overemphasized in a continent which was undeveloped and dependent on the outside world. He attributed much of the misery in Africa to the serious lack of trained personnel in management and administration, industry, health and other vital fields. To reduce these problems, human resources development and utilization had to be given top priority and promoted within the new Regional Framework for Human Resources Development and Utilization advocated by the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Human Resources.

58. Of particular importance was the stress placed in the Framework on the need to impart practical skills to the youth and to change the content of school curricula to make it development-oriented. He however, regretted the fact that the draft Framework did not address itself more emphatically to the situation regarding the spread of conflicts and civil strife on the continent. These, he said, had caused serious disruptions to the process of educational expansion, destroyed health facilities, sparked off massive population movements and increased the incidence of famine. In this context, it was difficult to see how effectively planning, development and utilization of human resources could be pursued.

59. Referring to the implementation of the Declaration of the 27th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU on the employment crisis in Africa, he said that Ghana had endeavoured to reduce rural to urban migration and the attendant high urban unemployment rates, by improving living conditions in the rural areas through increased investment, rural electrification, construction of roads, provision of safe drinking water and health facilities, banking services, agricultural credit, etc. The effect of these policies was a salutary reversal of the migration trend towards rural areas.

60. To promote the growth of small and medium scale enterprises, restrictions on access to foreign exchange and foreign business travel had been eased considerably, tax reforms instituted, training schemes for retrenched public servants introduced and a board to promote small-scale industries established. Ghana's efforts were constrained by the lack of adequate financial resources which was aggravated by its debt service obligations. He called on the international community to address Africa's indebtedness seriously. He also called for increased regional cooperation, in the

creation of common development institutions such as regional centres of excellence in technical and scientific training and research, so as to reduce costs and increase economies of scale. He concluded his submission by requesting the ECA to assist member states to establish research networks at the regional level in order to maximize the dissemination and use of research findings.

61. In his statement, the delegate from Gabon said that the economic recession and the recovery programme that had been put in place to resolve it, as well as the changed political situation in his country had caused much difficulties for the people. The demand for health, education and other human development services had increased. To meet this demand, and in spite of the austerity measures of the economic recovery programme, more resources had been provided to support human development. Equally, all efforts were being made to rehabilitate retrenched civil-servants to enable them take on new jobs or settle down in self-employment. He stressed that Gabon which, like all other African economies, operated an export oriented economy, had to define new strategies for co-operation with other African countries in order to strengthen its socio-economic foundations and significantly improve on human development.

62. The delegate from Rwanda took the floor. He congratulated Egypt and all other African countries on the election, by the Security Council of the United Nations, of the first African to the high office of Secretary-General of the United Nations. He then said that his country accorded the highest priority, in the field of human resources, to the improvement of the health status of the population. He said that in a situation where, according to WHO, more than 400 million Africans were afflicted with endemic diseases, there was an urgent need for efforts to be redoubled to address the health problems of the continent. The situation was even more urgent in view of the fact that an unhealthy and debilitated work force cannot be productive and can only consume the nation's meagre resources which could have been put to other uses. He called on all African governments to pursue the objectives of Health for All by the Year 2005.

63. In pursuance of the recommendation of Khartoum Declaration, Sudan had decided to make man the centre of development. Poverty-oriented programmes were strengthened and were geared more to income generation and the development of small-scale enterprise for individuals and groups. A fund for farmers, small industries and crafts was established. A social security and mutual benefit fund was established to cater to the low-income groups and to provide subsidies. He said that agriculture was developing in both modern and traditional sector. 91 branches of the Agricultural Development Bank were established. In the area of basic needs efforts were made to increase basic education and primary health care. The universities' intake had increased. In-service training was on the increase. Efforts were also being made to promote and strengthen public administration and management.

64. Public investment in the agricultural sector had been increased tremendously and the country had attained self-sufficiency in sugar and was about to achieve the same in respect of wheat production. A Human Resources Management Council had been established to formulate policies on training, revise pay structures, guarantee

minimum wages, etc. Also greater efforts were being made to encourage popular participation in the development planning process.

65. In her statement, the delegate from the Seychelles said that the size and population of her country did not make it immune to the problems of human resources development affecting Africa. The country had serious manpower shortages and therefore depended heavily on imported skills. Although basic education was universal in Seychelles, about two-thirds of those who entered the labour market were unskilled. To correct this imbalance, educational reforms had been introduced to increase the skill acquisition content in primary and basic education curricula.

66. By virtue of its size, the Seychelles could not afford a university of its own. Much of its post secondary level education and training had to be undertaken abroad. This had implications for the degree of relevance of training to local needs and realities. Along with its neighbouring island nations, Seychelles was in the process of exploring the possibilities of establishing a sub-regional university to meet the middle and high level manpower needs of the Indian Ocean Islands. She said that the government had formulated a five-year human resources development plan for submission to a forthcoming donors conference for financing.

67. The leader of the Nigerian delegation, then took the floor. He congratulated the Chairman on his election and expressed the hope that his tenure of office would usher in progress in the promotion of human resources planning, development and utilization in Africa.

68. He noted that all available evidence indicated that there had been no real progress registered in the area of human development in Africa over the years. The circumstances continued to be grim. The conditions of living of the African peoples had deteriorated. Yet, the national statements made to the Conference had demonstrated the efforts of individual governments to ameliorate and, indeed, improve on the social conditions of the African people. Something, he said, was fundamentally wrong. It was either that the actions taken by national governments had failed to address the policy prescriptions, or the reports before the meeting had painted the wrong picture of conditions prevailing on the continent. The main issue before this conference, therefore, was the definition of a realistic regional framework for human resources planning, development and utilization, with a view to assuring progress, and complementarity with national, sub-regional and regional efforts at developing human resources and utilizing them.

69. He expressed the conviction that all efforts to design a plan and to implement it would fail if problems generated by the crucial issue of internal instability were not addressed. It was his view that the outcome of the Conference would be more credible if the problems arising from inter and intra-African disturbances were properly addressed.

70. He informed the meeting that Nigeria attached great importance to the Khartoum Declaration. In order to tackle the problem of employment generation, the

Nigerian government had established a National Directorate of Employment. The Directorate had been implementing four core programmes since its inception. The programmes were: youth employment and vocational skills development; small scale industries and graduate employment; self-employment in the field of agriculture; and special public works programme for employment creation.

71. Financial constraints had militated against a total realization of the potentials of these programmes. However, Nigerians were reasonably satisfied with their success in providing employment and vocational skills for youths, as well as with the provision of self-employment opportunities among new school leavers.

72. Additional programmes established to generate employment within the urban and rural communities included: (a) The Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI); (b) Better Life for Rural Women; and (c) Peoples Banks and Community Banks which provide credit facilities to small scale enterprises and members of co-operative organizations in the rural and informal sectors.

73. The Nigerian delegate stated that African governments should be committed to the objectives of potable and safe drinking water for all by the year 2000. Nigeria had taken its responsibilities under these programmes and the recommendations of Khartoum Declaration quite seriously. It had invested considerable resources in the provision of affordable health, and streamlined the institutional framework for health-care delivery to the populace through three tiers which consisted of: (a) primary health care at the local government level for rural communities; (b) secondary health-care at the State government level; and (c) tertiary health-care delivery system at the Federal government level.

74. Finally, he reiterated the need for a framework to be created that would facilitate progress in the individual and collective efforts of African countries to improve the living standards of their people. The international train, he said, had left; the outcome of the work of the Conference, would reveal whether Africa would be able to catch that train.

75. In his contribution to the general debate, the delegate from Kenya said that his country had made considerable progress in the field of human resources planning, development and utilization. In 1988 a fully-fledged Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment was set-up to initiate and prosecute policies on Manpower Planning, Development and Utilization in the country and co-ordinate the implementation of programmes arising therefrom.

76. The Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment had since clarified and crystalized its role and functions having set-up three technical departments, namely, manpower planning, manpower development and national employment bureau with the broad policy mandates for national manpower planning and development; employment; skills inventory; employment services; planning and co-ordinating of training programmes; Kenyanization and employment exchange.

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77. He called for a move away from the omnibus approach to human resources management issues. Trying to sustain desirable human resources development services, he said, had caused part of the debt problem. Investments in human resources should be made in much the same manner as investments in other economic inputs, like land, capital and technology.

78. The belief that limitless expenditures in education, training and manpower development programmes could be made, without due rationalization with the actual needs of the economy, should now be abandoned. Because of resource scarcities, investments in human resources development must be targetted to the achievement of higher productivity. This issue should be looked at more thoroughly, so that over the years, concern would be focussed on the development and utilization of needed skills in order to avoid duplication, conflict and overlap, which end up dissipating the limited resources at the disposal of African countries.

79. In conclusion, he said, that his delegation would like to be associated with the sentiments already expressed in congratulating Egypt and Africa on the elevation of His Excellency Boutros Ghali to the high office of Secretary-General of the United Nations organization.

80. The observer from UNFPA, in submitting his statement, drew the attention of the Conference to the demographic situation in the world and to the importance of integrating population factors such as size, growth, composition, age-sex structure, as well as its determinants - fertility, mortality, migration and urbanization - into both macro-economic development planning and sectoral development strategies. Africa had the highest regional growth rate the world had ever seen and its population was estimated to grow from 650 million to 900 million people by 2001. In addition, the explosive urban growth had escalated needs for city services, housing, water and sanitation services, and food supply.

81. He said UNFPA was actively supporting countries that were implementing population policies and programmes to balance their population policies with their development concerns. In cooperation with ILO, UNFPA was also providing assistance to a number of African countries with projects related to population, employment and human resources development, the setting up of population and planning units, in data collection, analysis and research, family life education and related services. He concluded on the note that UNFPA recognized the right of each country to formulate its own population policy. It therefore stood ready to assist in the development of programmes aimed at achieving better balances among the different population factors.

82. The observer from the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE), then made his statement. He informed the Conference about AALAE's mandate in human resources development with its focus on the adult population at all levels, ranging from the underprivileged illiterates whose indigenous skills were being ignored to the highly educated African elite whose imported wisdom was in a crisis of irrelevance. In describing the basic principles of the mandate, the observer said that AALAE placed much emphasis on restoring the dignity and integrity of the

African people which were continuously being eroded by enslavement, colonization, foreign education and presently by technical experts, consultants and foreign NGOs. As a necessary corollary to this, he said, AALAE also stood for the rights of the African people to determine their own development agenda and not to be forced to serve foreign-conceived development agendas. He said AALAE strongly supported the strengthening of institutions that were authentically African. In this regard, the observer thanked the OAU and the Government of Niger for their assistance to AALAE in setting up the African Training Institute for Literacy and Continuing Education. He concluded his statement by commending the move towards popular participation which he said symbolized Africa's journey to its roots.

83. The observer from the Commonwealth Secretariat then made a statement. He informed the Conference that the Commonwealth Secretariat supported the integrated approach to human resources development, planning and utilization, which the ECA propagated. He said that although even the many programmes for human resources development were insufficient to meet the need, the resources available to support these programmes were grossly inadequate. Africa needed to develop strategies to fully integrate human development concerns into national development processes as well as coordinated efforts for the development of higher education.

84. The Commonwealth Secretariat, through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, had been working closely with all major regional and national higher education institutions. He said that the Secretariat would be disposed to assisting in the development of regional programmes for education and training as well as national programmes in higher education, particularly in the fields of science and technology, management, entrepreneurship development and technical and vocational training. The Secretariat could also assist national institutions to strengthen their capabilities and to develop regional programmes in specialized areas. It would also assist in the award of fellowships and provide other forms of technical assistance. He said that discussions were already underway with ECA on ways of proceeding with cooperation along these lines. The observer assured the Conference of the Commonwealth Secretariat's commitment to assist in the implementation of some of the recommendations that would eventually be made.

85. The representative of ILO/JASPA in his statement described to the Conference the various interventions which were being undertaken by his agency to promote human resources planning, development and utilization. He said, ILO which devoted about 60 per cent its global technical cooperation activities in Africa and had provided assistance through the conduct of training workshops and seminars for government officials, advisory missions to countries and formulation of projects. On reviewing the human resources situation in Africa, he said that at one extreme, skills had to be produced to effectively utilize new technologies, while at the other, investment choices should be influenced by a sustainable wage/capital rental ratio. Manpower policies needed a different focus because of the shifts from planned economies to more reliance on market forces, and the role of these policies vis-a-vis the public and private sectors should not be overlooked. He said emphasis must be placed on pursuing an integrated approach to human resources development within overall macro-economic development policies and strategies. The experiences of the Asian

NIEs and the second line of NIEs, demonstrated that countries could only be transformed through research, and skill and entrepreneurship development. He assured the Conference of ILO's willingness and readiness to assist African countries in the implementation of this complex task.

B. Consideration of the Report of the Technical Committee of Officials

86. The Conference considered the report of the Technical Committee of Officials and adopted it with one amendment, deleting paragraph 143 of the report. It also adopted Resolution 1/91 which is annexed to this report.

C. Consideration of the Reports of the 4th, 5th and 6th Meetings of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten

87. The Conference noted the reports of the 4th, 5th and 6th meetings of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten.

VII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

88. There was no other business to discuss.

VIII. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

89. A representative of the Secretariat announced that according to its Terms of Reference, the Conference should meet every three years. Its Fifth meeting would, therefore, be convened in 1994 at a venue to be determined at a later date. Member States would be duly informed of the exact dates and venue of the Fifth meeting, in due course.

IX. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

90. The Conference considered its report and adopted it.

X. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

91. The Chairman thanked the participants for their active participation and also congratulated the Secretariat for the quality of the documents and presentations.

92. The representative of the Secretariat then took the floor to commend the delegates for the quality of the debate, which reflected the serious concern over the state of the planning, development and utilization of human resources and the need to develop the continent's human resources in an effective manner to achieve sustained growth and development. The real challenge was the judicious implementation of what was agreed upon. The Chairman then declared the Conference closed.