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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Intergovernmental Meeting of African
Port Experts and Senior Officials on
Improved of Port Performance

22-24 January 1990, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

WAYS AND MEANS TO IMPROVE PORT PERFORMANCE
IN AFRICAN PORTS

(Follow-up by ECA of the recommendations made during the
Intergovernmental Meeting of Chief Executives and Senior Port Officials
of African ports on the improvement of port productivity in Africa
(29-31 October 1987, Addis Ababa)

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I. Introduction

1. ECA organized an Intergovernmental meeting of Chief Executives and senior port officials of African ports on improvement of African port performance. The meeting took place in Addis Ababa from 29 to 31 October 1987. During the meeting recommendations on ways and means to improve port performance were adopted. One of the recommendations requested ECA to "act as a focal point for promoting co-operation through maintaining close contacts with ports and providing a forum for meetings of African port officials."

II. Activities carried out from 1987

(a) Draft follow-up report

2. ECA prepared a draft follow-up report on the improvement of African port performance in April 1988 and circulated it to the Secretariats of the three Port Management Associations (PMAWCA, NAPMA, PMAESA) for comments.

(b) Follow-up mission

3. ECA undertook a follow-up mission to the Secretariats of PMAWCA (5-9 July 1988) and NAPMA (14-21 August 1989) to discuss the follow-up report with the two associations for further finalization and distribution to all African Port Authorities. Regarding PMAESA, as the interim Secretariate of the Association was then at the ECA Headquarters, a mission was not mounted.

(c) Questionnaire

4. ECA prepared a questionnaire for discussions with the Associations. However during the missions to the Secretariats it was agreed that the questionnaire would be used by the three Associations for collecting data from member ports and the idea was to intensify the participation of all port authorities of the associations in the exercise and gather information as much as possible. The information should be later submitted to ECA. It was done so and ECA prepared a report on African port performances which was distributed to all port authorities (refer to document DEC/TRANSCOM/72).

(d) Proposals on Harmonization of Port Regulations in Africa

5. This document (DEC/TRANSCOM/50) was prepared by ECA and circulated to the three Port Management Associations for comments.

The document attracted interest of the Associations. NAPMA planned to examine the report during the Council meeting in December 1988. PMAESA discussed the report in its Council meeting in December 1989 and recommended that experts from IMO, UNCTAD and ECA be co-opted to assist the PMAWCA Committee on harmonization of Port Regulations in its work to prepare the proposals on up-dating port regulations in the ports of the subregion.

(e) Preparation for Second UNTACDA

6. An important aspect to be brought to the attention of this meeting is that the three subregional port management associations are included in the list of sub-sectoral African inter-governmental organizations which will participate in the preparation and implementation of the sectoral programmes of the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade, practically taking part in the meetings of the Inter-Agency Co-ordinating Committee of the Second UNTACDA. The composition of sub-sectoral groups was formally endorsed during the 7th Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning held in Tangiers (Morocco) in October 1989.

(f) Exchange of Information

7. One of the ideas of the previous Intergovernmental meeting of African port experts was to organize, through ECA, exchange of information on the studies and researches carried out by the three associations in order to reduce expenditures of the sister associations on similar studies so as to avoid duplications. Not much progress has so far been made in this field. It is understood that the port management associations should compile a register of studies, carried out by them and submit them to ECA as well as copies of these studies in order to enable ECA to advise as sister associations on a possibility to benefit from such a compendium.

(g) List of African Port Experts

8. ECA is presently engaged in preparation of a compendium of African Port Experts. The blank forms were sent to all three port management associations and when filled in will be composed and published by ECA in order to enable African administrations and organizations dealing with ports to make the best possible use of expertise available in African countries.

(h) Activities of African Port Management Associations

9. It has been noted with satisfaction that African subregional port management associations reserve no efforts to develop ports in this respective subregions and are engaged in a number of projects on improvement of port performance. An account of their activities will be given by their representatives.

10. It should also be noted that PMAESA established finally its permanent secretariat in January 1989 and its 16th Council meeting has just taken place in Addis Ababa last week. As you well remember ECA provided secretarial work to the Association since 1978.

Conclusions

11. The following conclusions could be made:

- The recommendations of the First Intergovernmental Meeting are being implemented by the Associations on subregional level in respect of future development of co-operation among ports of the respective subregions.

12. However more emphasis should be given to the co-operation on the regional level. The proposed areas of co-operation here could be as follows:

- creation of data banks
- exchange of expertise
- participation in joint projects
- participation in the preparation of second Decade programme.

13. It is proposed to create a permanent co-ordination committee which would supervise and monitor development of such cooperation on regional level, elaborate a programme of work and advise to the three associations on future actions to be undertaken to promote such a co-operation. The terms of reference of the committee would include:

- (a) Preparation of the programme of co-operation
- (b) Review and distribution of the available studies to ports among the associations;
- (c) Revision of the list of African port experts;
- (d) Preparation of the proposals on regional port projects;
- (e) Participation in the preparation of the Decade programme in respect of regional port projects.

14. This Committee would meet once a year presumably during council meetings of one of the associations and review the progress made during the year.

15. Composition of the committee proposed as follows:

1. Representative assigned from PMAWCA, PMAESA, NAPMA
2. ILO, IMO, UNCTAD, ECA which will also act as secretariat

16. The Inter-Governmental Meeting of African Port experts and senior officials suggested to be organized every two years at alternative venues.