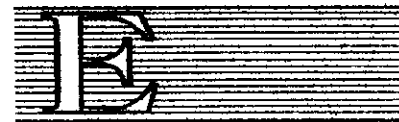


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**Fifth Regional Conference on the Development  
and Utilization of Mineral Resources in Africa**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
10-17 November 1993**

**THE FUTURE INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE OF THE  
REGIONAL CONFERENCE: CONFERENCE OF  
AFRICAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND  
UTILIZATION OF MINERAL AND ENERGY  
RESOURCES**

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**FUTURE INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE OF THE  
REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

**I. BACKGROUND TO THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEVELOPMENT AND  
UTILIZATION OF MINERAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA**

1. The Regional Conference on the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources in Africa (RCMDUMRA) was instituted in 1981. During its last session, the Conference of Ministers of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa decided to change the structure of this intergovernmental meeting, a change which was approved by the General Assembly. The present note which aims at informing the current fifth session, after presenting the origin of RCMDUMRA, its evaluation until now and its future mandate, calls on participants to consider practical measures for organizing future conferences within the new structure.

**1.1 ORIGIN OF THE MANDATE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE**

2. The first Regional Conference on Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources in Africa took place in accordance with the provisions of Chapter III, paragraph 80(a) of the Lagos Plan of Action for the economic development of Africa. It took place at Arusha from 2 to 6 February 1981 and decided to organize a second conference. During this second conference which was held at Lusaka, Zambia, in 1985, African countries agreed that the regional conferences on development and utilization of mineral resources in Africa should thenceforth take place every two years. This decision having been ratified by the Conference of Ministers of the Commission, then by the Social and Economic Council, the Conference became a regular ECA intergovernmental meeting, though the two-year time has not been scrupulously respected due to the frequent backing down of countries which had offered to host the Conference.

3. The basic objective of the African Regional Conference on Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources was to promote cooperation among the countries of the African region on the basis of their development activities so that:

- (a) African mineral commodities production should improve and be diversified;
- (b) African mineral commodities should contribute to the development and growth of the continent and of the economic, industrial, agricultural and other sectors;
- (c) African export earnings from mineral commodities and their products should increase;
- (d) Intra-African trade in mineral commodities and their by-products should expand;
- (e) Mineral consumption on the continent should rise;
- (f) Minerals should have the maximum possible impact on the socio-economic progress of African peoples;

- (g) African countries should share and exchange information and experience with mineral resource development policies and strategies; and
- (h) African countries should coordinate their policies and strategies for mineral resource development, marketing and consumption at the subregional and regional level.

## 1.2 ORGANIZATION AND ATTENDANCE

4. Four Regional Conferences have taken place - the first at Arusha (United Republic of Tanzania) in 1981, the second at Lusaka (Republic of Zambia) in 1985, the third at Kampala (Republic of Uganda) in 1988 and the fourth at Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in 1991. Several topics concerning mineral resource development and utilization were examined and appropriate recommendations adopted for national, subregional and regional action. These recommendations are generally the basis of the work programme of the secretariat's Mineral Resource Section.

5. The ministerial-level conference is prepared by a technical meeting of high-level experts. Visits to mining activities (geological operations, research institutions, etc) are generally included in its programme, to encourage exchange of experiences and to strengthen cooperation. Many African, international and United Nations institutions take part as observers.

6. Table 1 below shows the level of participation in the Regional Conference since its creation. Map 1 which is annexed to this note provides data on attendance at the conference by individual African countries. This shows that 35 countries have attended the Conference at least once, which certainly demonstrates quite considerable interest in this forum.

Table 1:

Participation at the first four sessions of the Regional Conference on the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources in Africa

Participants	1st Conf. Arusha (Tanzania 1981)	2nd Conf. Lusaka, (Zambia 1985)	3rd Conf. Kampala (Uganda 1988)	4th Conf. Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso 1991)
Member States	20	17	22	22
Inter-African and international institutions (observers)	22	12	6	11
TOTAL	42	29	28	33

N.B. Ministerial-level attendance ranged from 12 to 16.

## II. NEW MANDATE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

### 2.1 REASONS FOR CHANGING THE STRUCTURE AND MANDATE OF THE CONFERENCE

7. Changing the structure of the Regional Conference occurred within the context of the general restructuring of "the Commission's intergovernmental mechanism" aimed at:

- (a) Reducing the number of policy and subsidiary organs of the Commission by reorganizing of the Conferences around specific themes;
- (b) Rationalizing the programming and preparation of the Conferences and meetings;
- (c) Avoiding the implication and overlapping of meetings, thus helping Governments to economize on the costs of participation in the meetings.

8. On the basis of the above mentioned considerations, resolution 757(XXVIII) of the twenty-eighth session of the Commission and nineteenth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for economic development and planning (held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 3 to 6 May 1993, in the chapter on "Thematic Ministerial Conferences", decided that the Conference would continue to meet every two years and that "its scope of action would now encompass energy issues". Consequently, the Council has called this new structure "Conference of African Ministers in charge of Development and Utilization of Mineral and energy resources." This has a "Committee of Experts".

### 2.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES

9. Apart from the fact that the new structure of the regional conference covers both energy and mineral resources, the basic objectives of the forum differ very little from previous ones. In fact, in accordance with the terms of the note of presentation which defines its mandate, the basic objective of the Conference is to promote cooperation among African countries on the basis of such development activities so that:

- (a) The production of minerals and energy in africa can be expanded and diversified;
- (b) Minerals and energy can contribute towards the development and growth of the continent in the industrial, agricultural and other economic and social sectors;
- (c) Export earnings of African countries, from mineral and energy raw materials and mineral/energy-based products may increase;

- (d) Intra-African trade in mineral and energy raw materials as well as in energy and mines-based products can expand;
- (e) Sustainable utilization of minerals and energy in the continent may be enhanced;
- (f) Minerals and energy development and utilization can have the maximum possible impact on the socio-economic advancement of the African people;
- (g) African countries can intensify the sharing and exchange of information and experiences on the objectives, policies and strategies for sustainable development and utilization of their mineral and energy resources;
- (h) African countries can harmonize their policies and strategies for the sustainable development and utilization of their mineral and energy resources at the subregional and regional levels;
- (i) African countries can establish modalities and programmes of cooperation and coordination in the utilization of mineral and energy resources; and
- (j) African countries can find ways and means of promoting the profitable marketing of their mineral and energy products/outputs regionally and internationally.

### III. THE FUNCTIONING OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES.

10. The establishment of this new regional conference structure which integrates minerals and energy, beyond the reasons justifying it, is a mark of the additional interest of the Commission in the vital socio-economic development sectors of the continent. In fact, until now, despite its undeniable importance, the energy area has not benefitted from a properly recognized ministerial conference. This observation has already been made by African high-level energy experts during their Ad-hoc Meeting on Energy Policies and Strategies in Africa which was held at Addis Ababa from 17 to 19 May 1993.

11. Nevertheless, although this decision is the mark of decisive progress, the specific functioning of the Conference under its new form may backfire if correct measures are not taken for its organization. This means that, on the basis of the current situation of ministerial trusteeship of these two sectors in African, establishment of effective mechanisms for the functioning of the African Regional Conference can be made based on the experiences in both sectors.

12. In fact, it emerges from map No. 2 which was prepared on the basis of the information in our possession, that in 31 out of 52 member States, Energy and Mines fall under the same Ministry. Though in practice each sector should be managed by a separate department, this large majority with common ministerial responsibility tends to show that in most of our countries tight complementarity of Energy and Mines is already acknowledged. Thus while, the question of the

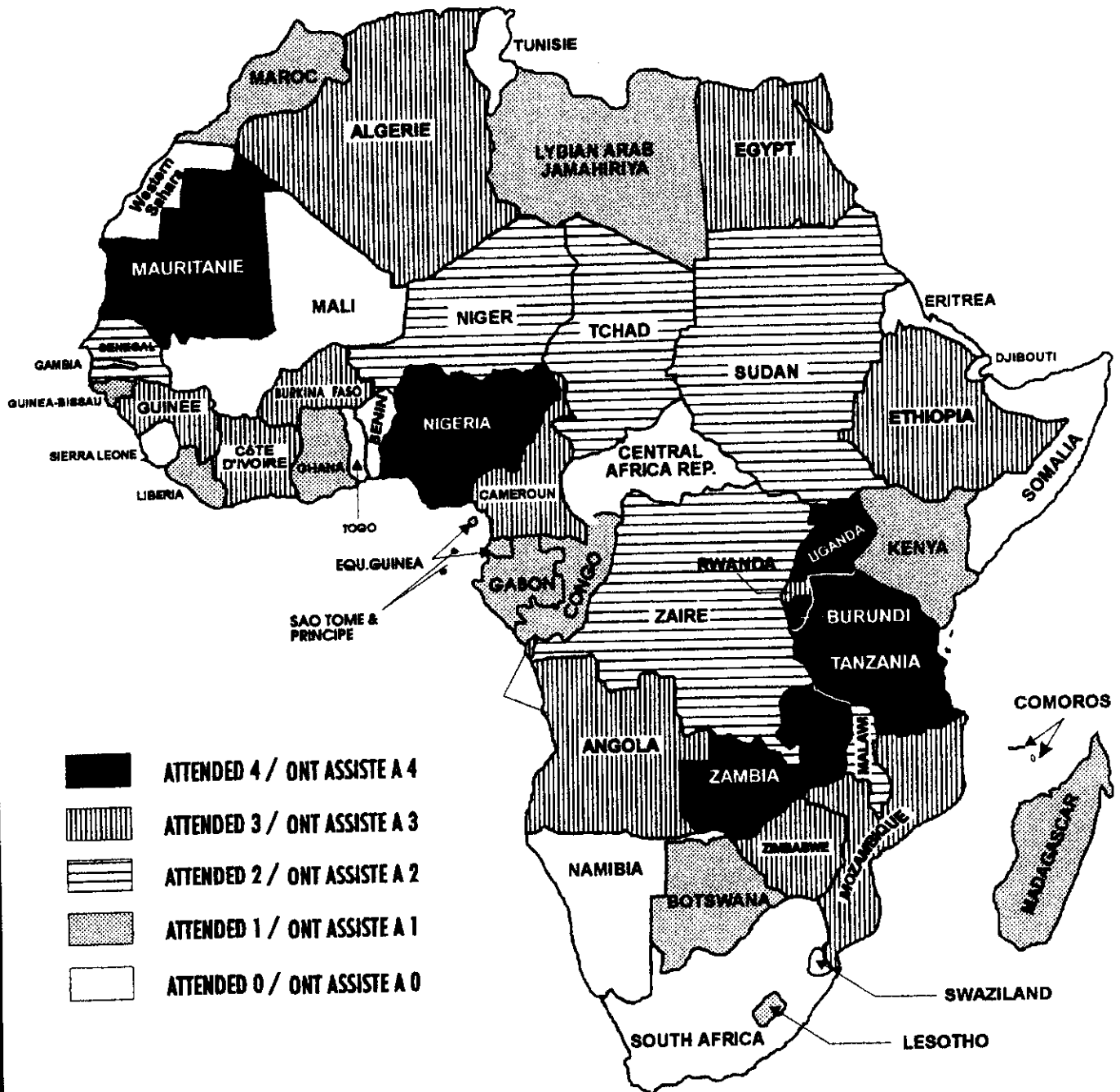
usefulness of having one conference does not arise. It would be needed to define some directions for the functioning of the new conference, taking into account (without discrimination) the two components, energy and mines.

13. In this regard, thought should be given inter-alia to:
- (a) The choice and the formulation of themes for subsequent sessions of the Conference;
  - (b) The modalities for conducting the work both at the technical and ministerial levels;
  - (c) The action to be taken between sessions of the Conference;
  - (d) The relations of the secretariat with the structures concerned in the member States, especially in the cases where the two sectors fall under different ministries.

14. In ensuring that the representatives of countries present at the Conference should make relevant proposals based on their own experience, it seems useful to us to point out that the Ad-hoc Meeting of Energy Experts which was mentioned in paragraph 10 above, thought that to make sure that energy would receive the attention it deserves, it would be wise for the meetings to be held separately at the level of the Technical Preparatory Committee.

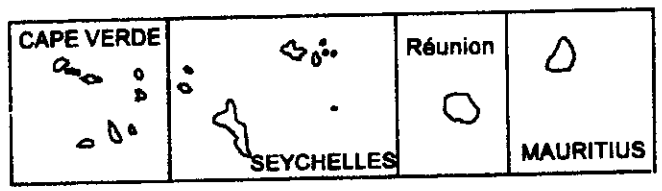
**PARTICIPATION OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES AT THE FOUR REGIONAL CONFERENCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF MINERAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA**

**PARTICIPATION DES PAYS AFRICAINS AUX QUATRE CONFERENCES REGIONALES SUR LA MISE EN VALEUR ET L'UTILISATION DES RESSOURCES MINERALES EN AFRIQUE**



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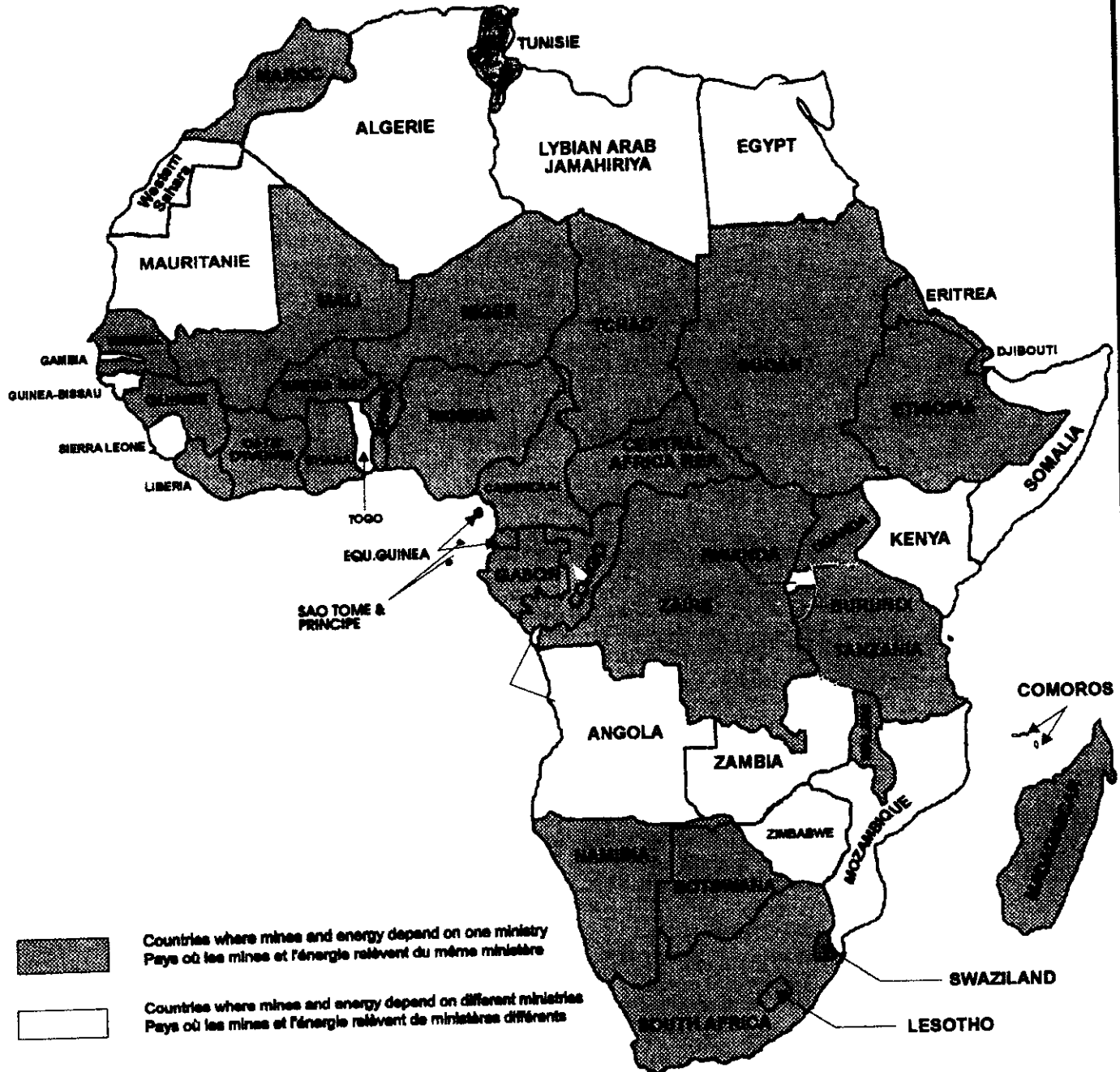
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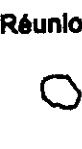

# TUTELLE MINISTERIELLE DES RESSOURCES MINERALES ET DE L'ENERGIE EN AFRIQUE

## MINISTERIAL TRUSTEESHIP OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY IN AFRICA



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<p>CAPE VERDE</p> 	 <p>SEYCHELLES</p>	<p>Réunion</p> 	 <p>MAURITIUS</p>
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**ORGANOGRAM  
OF  
THE AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT  
AND UTILIZATION OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY**

