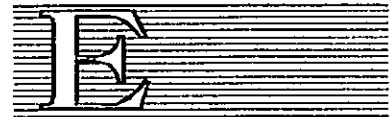


56373



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.: GENERAL

EDECO/TD/3/055.96
23 January 1996

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Conference of African Ministers Responsible
for Trade, Regional Cooperation,
Integration and Tourism

First Session

Technical Committee of Experts

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
7-13 February 1996

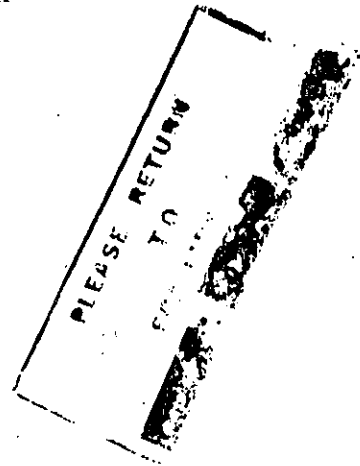
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Conference of African Ministers Responsible
for Trade, Regional Cooperation,
Integration and Tourism

First Session

Ministerial Meeting

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
14-16 February 1996



**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE
SEVENTH ALL-AFRICA TRADE FAIR**

Introduction

It may be recalled that the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair took place in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe from 2 to 10 September 1992, and that a Report was submitted to the Twelve Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade held in Tunis, Tunisia on 19 - 21 October, 1993, entitled the "Report on the Sixth All-Africa Trade Fair and Modalities for Organising the Seventh All-Africa Trade Fair".

2. Earlier in that year, a similar Report was submitted by the General Secretariat of the OAU to the Fifty-eighth Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers under cover of document CM/L777 (LVIII) entitled "Evaluation of the Sixth OAU All-Africa Trade Fair and Preparations for the Seventh OAU All-Africa Trade Fair". While taking into account the Observations and Concluding Remarks contained in the report submitted to the Conference of the Ministers of Trade and the recommendations arising therefrom, the OAU Council of Ministers endorsed the recommendations presented to it and accordingly adopted resolution CM/Res.1458 (LVIII). A copy of the said resolution is attached to the present report for ease of reference.

3. In conformity with the directives of the OAU Council, as contained in the resolution under reference, the OAU Secretary General, upon advice constituted the new Organising Committee taking into account the technical expertise of the individuals and the institutions, bearing in mind the need for a balanced geographical representation of Africa.

4. It was against that background that the General Secretariat of the OAU took initial steps to hold a bilateral technical meeting with the Ministry of Commerce and Tourism of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in July 1994 in Abuja, Nigeria. This was followed by the holding again in Abuja, Nigeria of the First Meeting of the Technical Organising Committee from 23 to 25 October, 1995 at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers in Abuja, Nigeria.

5. The following is therefore a summary presentation of the Minutes of that meeting highlighting the main decisions taken with particular emphasis on the preparatory activities to be undertaken to ensure a successful Fair.

First Meeting of the Technical Organising Committee on the Seventh All-Africa Trade Fair

6. The first meeting of the Technical Organising Committee on the Seventh All-Africa Trade Fair took place in Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria, from 23 to 25 October 1995 under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Tourism. Nigeria is the host country of the Fair.

7. In accordance with the recommendation that the Technical Organising Committee should be composed of technical experts with experience in trade fair organisation, contained in the report to the Fifty-eighth Ordinary Session of Council under the title, Report on the Evaluation of the Sixth OAU All-Africa Trade Fair and Preparations for the Seventh OAU All-Africa Trade Fair, the following organisations were invited to constitute the Committee and they were represented at the meeting : International Trade Centre (ITC) of UNCTAD/GATT, Union of African Radio and Television Organizations (URTNA), Pan-African News Agency (PANA), ECOWAS Secretariat, SADC Secretariat, COMESA Secretariat, Federation of West African Manufacturers' Associations (FEWAMA), African Business Roundtable, African Export-Import Bank (AFREXIM BANK), African Development Bank (ADB), UNIDO, Ministry of Foreign Trade of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

8. The following other institutions were invited to serve on the Technical Organising Committee (TOC), but could not attend the first meeting : International Telecommunications Union (ITU), UNIDO, UNCTAD, UNECA, ACP Secretariat, UNFAO, African Airlines Association (AFRAA), Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (Outgoing Chairman), East and Southern African Business Organization (ESABO), and Central African Chambers of Commerce.

9. In addition, the National Organising Committee of the host country was represented on the Committee. The General Secretariat of the OAU served as the Secretariat.

10. The main decisions of the meeting were as follows :

(i) **Date of the Fair**

The meeting agreed that the date of the Fair will be 9-17 November 1996. This is subject to confirmation by the Nigerian authorities as the date has to be cleared with the Head of State who is expected to open the Fair.

(ii) **Venue of the Fair and Official Address**

It was agreed that the venue of the Fair will be the Lagos International Trade Fair Complex. It was also agreed that the official stationery of the Fair will show this address as well as the address of the OAU in Addis Ababa as contact points for prospective participants and visitors to the Fair.

(iii) **Theme, Slogans and Logo**

(a) It was agreed that the theme of the Fair should be "promote Africa's Development - Buy African Goods".

- (b) It was also agreed that several slogans could be devised to promote the Fair. These slogans could be used on T-shirts, posters, etc. The National Organising Committee (NOC) of the host country is to tap the creativity of the Nigerian public by initiating a national competition for slogans.
- (c) It was agreed that the art work on the logo of the Fair should be completed as soon as possible; and that a permanent logo should be adopted for the All-Africa Trade Fair.

(iv) Finance

- (a) The meeting noted that the annual budgetary process of the Federal Government of Nigeria was well advanced and that the host country authorities would soon secure the required funds in order to start prefinancing their pre-Fair activities. A portion of the expected funds would be made available in foreign exchange to facilitate payments outside Nigeria to cover, inter alia, some of the cost of advertising and publishing.
- (b) It was agreed that a Finance Sub-committee of the National Organising Committee (NOC) of the host country should be established to undertake local fund-raising activities, secure private sector sponsorship and coordinate financial matters pertaining to the Fair.
- (c) The meeting agreed that the OAU Secretariat and the African Business Roundtable, after close consultation with the NOC of the host country should co-sign and send out the invitation letters and related information to potential sponsors. The approach to potential sponsors should be centralised in this manner to avoid duplication.
- (d) The participants recommended that the OAU Secretariat should follow-up on the project document which has been submitted to the ACP Secretariat in Brussels for funding, by the Commission of the European Union, of certain activities of the Fair, including market surveys and the post-Fair technical evaluation.
- (e) It was agreed that, as a fall-back position, the OAU should approach alternative sources of funding, including the ADB, AFREXIM BANK, the Islamic Development Bank, and other bilateral donors, in the event that the EU Commission might turn down the financing request in the project document.

- (f) The representative of the OAU General Secretariat agreed to provide "seed money" to ITC, PANA, and URTNA for start-up activities in regard to the market survey and publicity. The three agencies were required to submit to the OAU a budget of their planned activities.

(v) Publicity

- (a) The time-table for the publicity campaign presented to the meeting by the Chairman of the Publicity sub-Committee of the NOC was endorsed. URTNA and PANA were assigned a major role in the campaign.
- (b) The meeting agreed that special publicity materials should be targeted at the African business community not only to secure their participation but also to encourage the exhibition of goods that reflect the strength of African economies.
- (c) It was also agreed that postage stamps, T-shirts, posters, stickers etc. should be produced to publicise the Fair. In this connection it was recommended that the Pan-African Postal Union should be requested to coordinate the printing of relevant postage stamps.
- (d) The meeting recommended that the Nigerian Head of State and the Federal Minister of Commerce and Tourism should send official letters of invitation to participate in the Fair to their counterparts in all Member States of the OAU.
- (e) The host country would also send delegations to selected OAU Member States to promote the Fair.
- (f) The meeting recommended that this initiative of the host country to send missions to selected Member States should be well coordinated so that the publicity and sensitisation campaigns at the various national levels should target, women's organisations, manufacturers' associations, chambers of commerce etc. In this regard it was further recommended that each Member State should establish its national organising committee.

(vi) Market Survey/Buyer-Seller Meeting

- (a) The meeting agreed that a market survey should be undertaken in good time before the Fair to provide relevant, up-to-date, and convincing information

on business opportunities to potential participants in the Fair. In this regard, the demand and supply surveys already carried out by COMESA and ECOWAS are to be up-dated and used as part of the market resource material for this Fair.

- (b) It was agreed that special effort should be made to survey the countries contiguous to Nigeria as a higher level of participation should be expected of them.
- (c) Information from the market survey should be presented in a succinct format focussing on specific products or services and business opportunities. The result of the survey should be widely disseminated to attract buyers and sellers to the Fair and to facilitate their transactions during the Fair.
- (d) It was further agreed that computerised Trade Information Networks, such as those of COMESA and ECOWAS should be used to link buyers and sellers during the Fair.
- (e) The meeting recommended that a sub-Committee of the Technical Organising Committee (TOC) should be established to coordinate the market survey and the buyer/seller meetings. This sub-Committee is to be chaired by ITC.

(vii) Investment Forum

- (a) The meeting reviewed the need for OAU Member States to undertake investment promotion activities. It was accordingly agreed that apart from promoting intra-African trade and investment, the Fair should be used to attract foreign direct investment to Africa. Accordingly, an investment forum would be organised during the Fair.
- (b) The purpose of the Forum would be, not so much to identify or present portfolios of investment projects but to make the African and international business communities aware of the investment opportunities that exist in Member States of the OAU and the role of international financial institutions and private investors in facilitating the exploitation of these opportunities.

- (c) In connection with the above, it was agreed that invitations to the Forum could be to non-African investors and institutions.
- (d) The Forum could also be used as an opportunity to address the negative image of Africa reflected in the international media and present African business success stories to attract foreign investment to African countries.
- (e) It was further agreed that the programme of the Forum will include a discussion of policy issues relating to infrastructure development, especially communications and technology.
- (f) The meeting agreed that a sub-Committee of the TOC under the Chairmanship of the African Business Roundtable (ABR) should be established to coordinate arrangements for the Forum.
- (g) The representative of the ABR undertook to mobilise its collaborating institutions including UNIDO, UNDP, International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) of the World Bank Group, the Corporate Council on Africa of the USA, the European Roundtable of Industrialists, and the Tokyo International Conference on Africa, to participate in the investment forum.

(viii) Involvement of the Private Sector in the National Organising Committee (NOC)

It was agreed that efforts should be made to secure the involvement of the Nigerian private sector in the planning and other preparatory activities of the Fair.

(ix) Rehabilitation of the Fair Site

The meeting noted that work will soon commence on the rehabilitation of the Lagos International Trade Fair Complex, the site of Fair.

(x) National/Local Trade Fairs

It was recommended that national/local trade Fairs and other major events should not be organised in Nigeria and other Member States too close to the date set for the All Africa Trade Fair as this could divert attention from and dissipate resources for the latter, and

consequently may result in the poor turnout of Member States and exhibitors at the Fair. Efforts were to be made to secure the cooperation of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce in cancelling its 1996 Lagos International Trade Fair which is normally held in November.

(xi) Visas, Customs, Foreign Exchange and Security

(a) The meeting agreed that the NOC of the host country should seek the cooperation of the immigration, customs, central bank and security agencies to facilitate entry, customs clearance, business transactions and security arrangements in connection with the Fair. The OAU delegation agreed to send to the NOC documentation on previous experience on these issues especially waiver of customs duty and policy on foreign exchange transactions.

(b) It was agreed that official policy on these issues should be settled quickly as this information would be required for the publicity campaign.

(xii) Rules, Regulations and Application Forms

It was agreed that rules, regulations and application forms for participation in the Fair should be kept simple; and that a consolidated rate should be charged for space rental, water, electricity, and other services.

(xiii) Brochures and Catalogues

The meeting, after an exhaustive exchange of views agreed that brochures containing information on visas, hotels, customs, clearing and forwarding of goods, foreign exchange policy, construction and decoration of pavilions, consolidated charges, etc, should be prepared for early and wide dissemination. Furthermore, it was also agreed that a catalogue of the Fair should be prepared and produced in time for circulation.

(xiv) Nigerian Airways, Association of African Airlines (AAFRA), and MINCOMAR

(a) The meeting underlined the importance of efficient and reliable transport services for intra-African trade expansion. Accordingly, it was agreed that the request for Nigerian Airways to become the official carrier of the Fair should be followed up by a formal proposal by the airline to the NOC of the host country.

- (b) It was also agreed that the OAU Secretariat should approach AAFRA and MINCOMAR (which is the institution on maritime transportation in West and Central Africa) in regard to securing concessional rates on air travel/freight and sea freight for the benefit of exhibitors and visitors to the Fair.

(xv) Host Country Agreement

The meeting considered experiences registered by the OAU Secretariat a previous All-Africa Trade Fairs and recommended the need for an Agreement to be signed between the host country and the OAU Secretariat. Accordingly it was agreed that the Host Country Agreement should be finalised by the NOC. The OAU agreed to make an input in regard to policy on customs waiver and foreign exchange transactions during the Fair. It was further agreed that the signing of the Host Country Agreement should be given a high profile with perhaps the Nigerian Head of State and the Secretary-General of the OAU taking part in the ceremony. The ceremony should also mark the official beginning of the publicity campaign.

(xvi) Date and Venue of Next Meeting

- (a) It was agreed that the next meeting of the TOC should be held in March 1996, the precise date would be decided later. In the interim, officials of the OAU Secretariat and the NOC would meet as and when necessary.
- (b) The venue of the next meeting would be the Lagos International Trade Fair Complex.

Follow-up Action of the OAU Secretariat

11. To conclude this report attention is hereby drawn to a number of activities that are being undertaken as follow-up activities. The Secretariat is following upon the project document of the Fair with the ACP Secretariat/EU Commission in Brussels. Steps are also being undertaken to identify alternative sources of funding in order to have a fall-back position in the event that the EU Commission does not respond positively to the OAU's request.

- The Secretariat has, since the end of the meeting provided information to the NOC for finalisation of Host Country Agreement. Coordination is also afoot with NOC on arrangements for a ceremony to sign the Host Country Agreement.

- To date URTNA has taken steps to propose a budget towards the production of publicity materials; the PANA and ITC are yet to submit their budgetary proposals. Consultations are also underway for the establishment of two sub-Committees of the TOC for arrangements for the conduct of the market survey buyer/seller meetings and the investment forum.

- The Secretariat has taken steps to establish contact with AAFRA and MINCOMAR to arrange concessionary rates for air travel, air and sea freight; so also consultations are underway with AAFRA for a promotional video on the Fair to be shown by African Airlines during their in-flight screening of films.

- Arrangements are also being made to ensure the coordination of the publicity campaign with NOC and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) so as to reach women's organisations, manufacturers' association, Chambers of Commerce etc., to secure their participation in the Fair and to identify exhibits which reflect Africa's economic strengths. In this regard we are pleased to report that the sensitization campaign has started in earnest in the Southern Africa (SADC) region, as the OAU Secretariat has started getting feedback from those countries in response to the steps being taken by the SADC representative on the Technical Organising Committee.

Recommendations

12. In the light of the conclusions reached by the Technical Organising Committee the General Secretariat has the honour to recommend that :

- (i) all Member States take note of the date for the 7th All-Africa Trade Fair as 6-17 November that the venue is the Lagos International Trade Fair Complex;
- (ii) all Member States, signatories to the Lome IV Convention should include the 7th All-Africa Trade Fair in their list of Trade Fair and submit applications to the Delegate of the European Union in their respective countries for funding under Indicative Programmes;
- (iii) all Member States may wish to ear-mark in their own national budgets funds to facilitate their participation in the 7th All-Africa Trade Fair;
- (iv) all Member States take steps to sensitize their Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturers' Associations, their key economic operators and their business community at large.

RESOLUTION ON THE OUTCOME OF THE SIXTH ALL-AFRICA
TRADE FAIR AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE SEVENTH
ALL-AFRICA TRADE FAIR

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, meeting in its Fifty-eighth Ordinary Session in Cairo, Egypt, from 21 to 26 June 1993,

Recalling Resolution CM/Res.277 (XIX) of the OAU Council of Ministers, whereby the All-Africa Trade Fair was institutionalized,

Bearing in mind the global experience gained by the General Secretariat after organizing successive All-Africa Trade Fairs, until the sixth one, held from 2 to 10 September 1992 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe and being aware of the need to ensure the judicious utilization of the resources allocated to the Fair,

Having examined the report to Council by the General Secretariat of the OAU on the "Evaluation of the Sixth OAU All-Africa Trade Fair and the preparations for the Seventh OAU All-Africa Trade Fair" contained in Document CM/1777 (LVIII) :

1. TAKES NOTE of the major recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General;
2. EXPRESSES ITS APPRECIATION to and CONGRATULATES the Government and people of Zimbabwe for having successfully hosted the Sixth OAU All-Africa Trade Fair;
3. REAFFIRMS the importance of the All-Africa Trade Fair as a major tool for the promotion of intra-African trade and as a driving force for the attainment of the objective to establish an African Common Market and African Economic Community;
4. INVITES Council to continue to strengthen its financial support to the All-Africa Trade Fair and URGES the General Secretariat to search for extra-budgetary funding and technical assistance for the Seventh All-Africa Trade Fair;
5. ACCEPTS WITH APPRECIATION the offers of the Governments of Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire to host the Seventh and Eighth All-Africa Trade Fairs in 1996 and 2000 respectively;

6. TAKES NOTE of the offer of Senegal to host the Ninth All-Africa Trade Fair in 2004 and accordingly REQUESTS the Secretary-General to take the necessary action in accordance with the usual procedure;
7. REQUESTS the Secretary-General to reorganize the composition of the Organizing Committee with a view to render the preparations for the future All-Africa Trade Fairs much more efficient and result-oriented;
8. URGES the OAU General Secretariat to urgently start with the programming and organization of preparatory activities for the Seventh All-Africa Trade Fair, bearing in mind all the recommendations contained in its report to Council and submit a periodic progress report to the successive sessions of the Council of Ministers, until the Fair is held.