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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Seminar on Urgent Administrative
Problems of African Governments
Addis Ababa, 2-12 October 1962

MINUTES

OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE SEMINAR ON URGENT ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS OF AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS (Wednesday, 3 October 1962)

During the morning the four committees met separately to discuss their internal organization and to plan their strategy during the forthcoming plenary sessions. Also it gave the members an opportunity to know one another and identify specific areas of discussion likely to come up.

Afternoon plenary session to receive the paper prepared by Mr. Daniel Pepy on Problems of Administrative Structure and Procedure in African countries.

First the Secretary read a cable received from Mr. Merghani, Director of the Division for Public Administration, wishing the seminar success.

Mr. Pepy made a summary of his paper, outlining four cardinal points. These were: Administrative Structure which should have the virtues of simplicity and flexibility; the power and ability to coordinate activities between administrative units or activities; the importance of relating development structures to the highest executive level and facilitating the access of all levels of government to the planning process; and finally, the peripheral aspects of government which must be related to the centre.

The discussion that followed Mr. Pepy's synthesis had to do with two main topics. First the participants dealt with the question of general organization and several references were made to the advisability of limiting the number of ministries or other institutions forming part of the executive area of government as a means of keeping it as simple as possible. It was also suggested that a model organization chart could be drawn up for governments to follow. Some participants held the opinion that this would be difficult because of the great variety of conditions that exist from country to country but that the committee on organization could very well consider the problem from its broadest possible angle using the principles

found in Mr. Pepy's paper as a basis.

The participants, representing the WHO and ILO then proceeded to outline the interest that these two organizations have in sound organization structures as a means to favour the development of functions in which these organizations have a vital interest. They stated that the rate of development of ministries of labour and public health depended to a large extent on the general development of the country, resources and other factors.

Mr. Pepy concluded this part of the debate by stating that the committee on organization had thus gathered some valuable points of view and would go into the details of these various aspects.

The session then turned to the question of organization for development. The participant representing ECA made a strong plea for the relation of development programme to the general welfare of the country and stressed the necessity to build development organizations on sound structures.

Several participants discussed the advantages and disadvantages of development plans based on the ascending or descending principle and the concluding speaker from Morocco stressed that both systems had the same aims and that it was most important to devise adequate methods that would serve either system.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 18:00 p.m.