



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

ECA/MRAG/96/77/MR



Multidisciplinary
Regional Advisory Group

**REPORT OF A TRAINING MISSION
TO SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC, RESEARCH
AND UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS**

**Pretoria (South Africa)
1-13 October, 1996**

**By
Wilfred A. Ndongko
Senior Regional Adviser
(Macroeconomics and Policy Reforms)**

**Addis Ababa
October, 1996**

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Executive Summary

On the invitation of the Director of the Africa Institute of South Africa, W.A. Ndongko, Senior Regional Adviser (Macroeconomics and Policy Reforms) of ECA-MRAG undertook an advisory and training mission to the Republic of South Africa from 1-13 October 1996. The main objective of the mission was to conduct a series of seminars on topical African development issues and challenges, to a variety of constituencies - ranging from government institutions, universities, to research institutes - with a view to enabling them understand the current socio-economic predication in the rest of the continent and some of the policy reforms which have been initiated by the African Governments to address the situation.

Some of the major African development issues and problems discussed with the various constituents included the impact of the Uruguay Round Agreement and in particular, WTO and changes in the economic environment on the long-term development of the continent, regional integration in Southern Africa and the role of ECA, macroeconomic sectoral planning within a developing integration arrangement, assesment of macroeconomic management policy reforms and the effects of foreign direct investment in Africa.

During the seminars, a variety of development issues were raised and concerns expressed by the participants from the different constituencies. The issues and questions were in the areas of SAPs, private direct investment, regional economic cooperation and integration, the changing international economic environment, the globalisation of financial, banking and production systems, role of ECA in regional integration in Southern Africa, and the potential leadership role of South Africa in the long-term development of the continent.

In view of the pertinent issues which were raised by the participants regarding the socio-economic situation and development policies in Africa and considering the important leadership role which South Africa could play in the development of the rest of the African countries, the mission recommends that, the Economic Commission for Africa, should within the framework of its mandate and programme of activities, promote and enhance that role.

To this end, the Commission could use its extensive experience in articulating development strategies for Africa, building institutional and human capacities for development and providing advisory services to member States and their intergovernmental organisations, to assist South Africa in building a viable and sustainable economy with a view to facilitating the reintegration of the country into the continental economy. This is absolutely necessary in view of the profound changes which have been taking place in the international economic, financial and trading environment - all of which have to a large extent affected the ability and capacity of many African countries to effectively design, implement, monitor and evaluate viable macroeconomic reform programmes.

I. INTRODUCTION

An ECA-MRAG training mission was undertaken by Mr. W. A. Ndongko Senior Regional Adviser (Macro-Economics and Policy Reforms) to the Republic of South Africa from 1 to 10 October 1996, under the auspices of the Africa Institute of South Africa, Pretoria. Founded in 1960 by the South African Academy of Arts and Science and the University of South Africa (UNISA), the Institute is an autonomous, free-standing and non-partisan organisation, registered under the Companies Act as a non-profit association. From a rather modest start, the Institute has grown over the past three and half decades, and it has now established itself as an independent and internationally recognised research and information centre.

As the main South African institution for the study of African development issues and problems, the Institute plays a dual public education role, namely :

- (i) To inform the South African society at large about the development trends and current events in Africa; and
- (ii) To help to underpin the role of South Africa, as a newly accepted member of the African Community of nations, in the continent in general and Southern Africa in particular.

To this end, the main function of the Institute is to collect (through its library and monitor service), to process and interpret (by news of applied research) and to disseminate (through periodicals and other publications, commentary to the mass media, and seminars, workshops and conferences) information, research findings and analyses on African and, particularly, Southern African political, economic and social affairs.

The Institute focuses its activities primarily on the political, socio-economic, international and development issues and challenges facing contemporary Africa. Research and information activities are confined mainly to the areas of economic and human development, problems of political change and transition, regional security issues, intra-African relations and global

economic trends and changes affecting the African continent. In practice, much of the Institute's work emphasizes country studies, encompassing one or more of these areas and ending with a more or less explicit assessment of political and economic risks.

While the geographical scope of its interest covers the entire continent, including South Africa, the Institute's main concern is with Sub-Saharan Africa in general and Southern Africa in particular. The Institute has no regular training or teaching activities. However, seminars, workshops and lectures are generally presented on request; and staff members, regularly prepare and present papers on various issues at national, regional and international fora.

As regards international linkages, the Institute has cooperation agreements with the Institute of African studies (University of Zambia, Lusaka-Zambia); Centre d'Etude d'Afrique Noire (Université de Bordeaux-Montesquieu IV, France); Centre d'Estudis Africans (Barcelona, Spain); Afrika-Studiecentrum (Leiden, The Netherlands); Centre of West African Studies (University of Birmingham, United Kingdom); Istituto per le Relazioni tra l'Italia e i Paesi dell'Africa, America Latina e Medio Oriente-IPALMO (Rome, Italy); and James Coleman African Studies Center (University of California, Los Angeles-U.S.A.).

Furthermore, the Institute is in the process of establishing cooperative linkages with the Centre for African Studies (University of Florida, Gainesville); African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies - ACDESS (Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria); Institute for African Studies and Research (Cairo University, Egypt); Centre for African Studies (University of Bombay, Mumbai-India); Institute of African Studies (New Delhi, India); Institute of African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow, Russia); Department of African Studies (St. Petersburg State University, Russia) and the Centre for African Studies (University of Copenhagen, Denmark). Finally, excellent working relationships are being maintained by the Institute with individual academics, researchers and institutions interested in African studies.

It was within the context of the above mission and operational activities, that the Director of the Institute requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa for the services of Mr. W.A. Ndongko to conduct a series of seminars on current African development issues and challenges to some South African academic, research and public institutions. To facilitate the mission, the Institute undertook to organise and manage the programme schedule during the entire period. However, before examining the broad focus of the seminars and the issues which were addressed during the mission, it is important to present the different participating academic, research and public institutions.

II. PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

During the period of the mission (1 - 12 October, 1996), a series of seminars were conducted in many university institutions, research institutes, government departments and institutions in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Durban. Specifically, the following were the participating institutions.

1. University Institutions

- (i) Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
- (ii) Department of Economics, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, Western Cape
- (iii) School of Economics, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch; Western Cape

2. Research Institutes

- (i) Economic Research Unit, University of Natal, Durban
- (ii) Centre for Policy Studies, Doornfontein, Johannesburg.

- (iii) Africa Institute of South Africa, Pretoria.

3. Public Institutions

- (i) Foreign Service Institute, Department of Foreign Affairs, Pretoria
- (ii) South African Reserve Bank, Pretoria
- (iii) Development Bank of Southern Africa, Midrand.

III. THE FOCUS OF THE SEMINARS CONDUCTED

As indicated earlier, the objective of the mission undertaken by Mr. W.A. Ndongko to South Africa was to conduct a series of seminars on topical African development issues and challenges to a variety of constituencies - ranging from academic institutions, research institutes to public and government agencies - with a view to enabling them better understand the current socio-economic predicament of the rest of the continent and the economic management reforms that have been initiated by the African Governments, in collaboration with The World Bank and International Monetary Fund, to redress the situation.

Furthermore, the impact of the Uruguay Round Trade Agreements and the World Trade Organisation as well as the changing global economic environment on the capacity of the African countries to formulate and implement efficient and viable development policies and programmes were also examined during the seminars. In addition, the role of the Economic Commission for Africa in promoting and enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration in Southern Africa was analyzed. Finally, the nature of macroeconomic sectorial planning within a developing regional integration arrangement such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was also examined.

Specifically, the main themes and areas of focus of the various seminars (see Annex I) which were conducted during the period of the mission were as follows.

1. **Macro Economics and Policy Reforms in Africa** (Foreign Service Institute, Pretoria)

- (i) Pre-1980 Socio Economic situation
- (ii) The foundations of the Socio-economic crisis
- (iii) Influence of Internal and External Factors
- (iv) Nature of the Macroeconomic Policy Reforms.
- (v) Socio-Economic Impact of the Reform Policies
- (vi) Controversial Issues in the Design and Implementation of the Reform Policies
- (vii) Considerata for the design and implementation of future macroeconomic policy reforms.

2. **UNCTAD and WTO within the Context of Globalisation and Liberalisation of the World Economy : Dangers and Challenges of Free Trade Agreements for Africa and South Africa.** (Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwatersrand)

- (i) Africa in a World of Transition
- (ii) Globalisation and Liberalisation of the World Economy
 - New Economic Order
 - New Trading Systems
 - New Monetary Order
 - Regional Economic Groupings and Trading Blocks
 - Europeans Single Market
 - East-West Cooperation
- (iii) UNCTAD and WTO : Challenges confronting the African countries and South Africa.

- Coping with losses of trade preferences under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP).
- Promoting Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in the light of UNCTAD IX Agenda.
- Intensification of Intra-Regional Cooperation including intra-regional trade and tourism within the framework of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

(iv) Programme of Action for the African countries

(a) Measures at the Continental level :

- Joint ECA/OAU Secretariat in collaboration with UNCTAD, GATT and ITC, to develop a technical assistance package on the Uruguay Round for Africa countries, through Seminars/Workshop.
- OAU/AEC Secretariat to apply to GATT/WTO for observer status within the required fora in order to safeguard the interests member states of the African Economic Community.
- OAU/AEC Secretariat to develop working contacts with existing regional economic groupings in other parts of the World especially NAFTA, MERCOSUR, ASEAN, etc.
- African countries to seek special compensation from the European Union and utilize it in restructuring their economies in order to recover from losses resulting from implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreement.

(b) Measures at the International level :

- Need to enhance African institutional and human capacities to comply with the new obligations arising from WTO Membership

- Need to develop and strengthen supply capabilities of tradeable goods and services in Africa.
- Improve the microeconomic trading environment and expand the use of new communication technologies in the service of trade through UNCTAD's "trade efficiency" programme.
- Support commodity diversification and marketing efforts.
- Expand the trading and investment opportunities of the African countries by identifying new trading opportunities.
- Development of a comprehensive approach by the Bretton Woods institutions to assist African countries with their multilateral debt problems.

3. **The Lagos Plan of Action and the Future Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Africa** (Department of Economics, University of Stellenbosch).

- (i) Background to LPA (1960-1980)
 - Political situation
 - Socio-Economic Situation
- (ii) Objectives and Goals of the LPA and FAL
 - Lagos Plan of Action (LPA)
 - Final Act of Lagos (FAL)
 - Decades of the 1980s
 - Decades of the 1990s
- (iii) Implementation of the LPA and FAL :
 - Objective of the implementation,
 - Structure of African Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration organisations

- Achievements of African Regional Economic Schemes
 - causes of poor performance
- (iv) Measures for strengthening Economic Cooperation and Integration at the Subregional Level.
- (v) Setting the African Economic Community in Process.

4. The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment on the Economic Development of Africa (School of Economics, University of Cape Town)

- (i) Classical Assumptions under International Capital Movements
- (ii) Factors influencing capital flows to the developing countries
- (iii) Developmental role of Foreign private capital flows the LDC's
- (iv) Analyzing the effects of Foreign Private Capital Investment in LDC's
- (v) Determinants of Foreign Private Direct Investment in Africa.
- (vi) Role of Foreign Direct Investment in African development
- (vii) Recent trends in Foreign Direct Investment flows to Africa.
- (viii) Current Issues in the revitalisation of Foreign Direct Investment in Africa
- (ix) Measures to Improve the Flow of Foreign Direct Investment to Africa
- (x) Role of the Economic Commission for Africa

5. A Critical Assessment of Macro-Economic Management in Africa and the Challenges in the Context of a Changing World Economy (Economic Research Unit, University of Natal, Durban and Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg)

- (i) The Socio-Economic Context of the Macroeconomic Reforms
- (ii) Influence of Internal and External factors
- (iii) The Nature of the Macroeconomic Management Policies
 - (a) IMF Stabilisation Programmes

- (b) The World Bank Structural Adjustment Policies
- (iv) The Impact Macroeconomic Reforms on African development
- (v) Controversial Issues in the Design, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Reform Policies
- (vi) The Nature of the Globalisation and liberalisation of the World Economy
- (vii) Implications of changes in the World Economy on Macroeconomic Management in Africa
- (viii) Proposed Policy Actions and Measures to be taken by African countries to counteract the changes in the World Economy
- (ix) Future Role of the Bretton Wood Institutions (the World Bank and International Monetary Fund).
- (x) Considerata for the Design and Implementation of Future Macroeconomic Management Programmes in Africa.

6. Regional Integration in Southern Africa : the Role of the Economic Commission for Africa (The Africa Institute of South Africa, and South African Reserve Bank, Pretoria)

- (i) Background
 - Impetus for Economic Cooperation and Integration in Africa
 - Need to establish Regional Economic groupings in all the Subregions
- (ii) ECA and Subregion Plans for Industrial Development in Africa.
- (iii) ECA's institutional and technical support for Regional Cooperation and Integration in Africa.
 - Establishment of Multinational Programming Operational Centres (MULPOCS) in the five Africa subregions
 - Establishment of the Multi-disciplinary Regional Advisory Group (ECA-MRAG) in the Secretariat of the Commission

- (iv) **Substantive Support to Regional Economic and Integration in Southern Africa.**
 - Provision of Advisory and Training services to PTA/COMESA and SADC
 - Participation in various high level policy-making and technical meetings of the PTA/COMESA and SADC organs.
- (v) **The future role of ECA in promoting and enhancing Regional Cooperation and Integration in Southern Africa.**

7. Macroeconomic Sectoral Planning within a Developing Regional Integration Arrangement : the Southern African Development Community - SADC (Development Bank of Southern Africa, Midrand)

- (i) **Importance of Macroeconomic sectoral coordination and planning**
- (ii) **Definition of Operational Concepts**
 - Economic Integration
 - Economic Development
 - Macroeconomic Planning
- (iii) **Towards a Conceptual Framework of Macroeconomic Sectoral Planning under a Developing Regional Integration Arrangement**
 - Features of the Framework
 - Modalities for Macro-economic sectoral planning under integration
- (iv) **Elements of a Macroeconomic Sectors Planning Model for a Developing Regional Integration Arrangement.**
 - Assumptions underlying the model
 - The Community Economy
 - Factors of Production
 - General Assumptions
 - Definitional Equations

- Structural and Behaviourial Constraints
- Objective of Macroeconomic sector planning
- Community and Sectoring Allocation of investments
- The choice of investment allocation parameters
- Effects of investment on national and sectoral incomes
- Conclusions

IV SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR ISSUES RAISED DURING THE SEMINARS

During the various seminars which were conducted by the mission, a variety of African development policy issues and concerns were raised by a cross-section of the South African University, Research and Public institutions. In view of the far-reaching implications of the issues for Africa's long-term development and for the potential leadership role in Southern Africa in particular and the continent in general, it is important to undertake a brief analysis of the main areas of concern.

At the level of the continent, the policy issues and challenges discussed with the different institutions were focused on macroeconomic management and policy reforms, the impact of foreign direct investment on African development, UNCTAD/WTO and the dangers/challenges of free trade agreements for Africa, macroeconomic sectoral planning within a developing integration arrangement and regional economic cooperation and integration with particular reference to Southern Africa.

As regards the macro-economic management and policy reforms, many participants in the seminars expressed concern over the inability of African countries to counteract the negative effects of the changing world economy on their national economies, absence of any popular participation in the design and implementation of national reform policies, and the urgent need for the establishment of the modalities for the involvement of stakeholders in the design of policy programmes.

The importance of the role of intellectuals in promoting critical capacities and analyzing different African development scenarios and that of ECA in facilitating dialogue between the Bretton Woods institutions and the African countries was emphasized. Furthermore, questions were raised as to whether the failure of the policy reforms in many countries could not encourage African governments to mobilize internal resources to generate the much needed capital for development. Finally the need for designing alternative macroeconomic policy packages was expressed by many of the participants.

As concerns the importance of private direct investment in African, it was argued that it was a futile exercise to undertake since economic mismanagement in many African countries had created an unfriendly investment climate. In view of the overriding objective of the long-term sustainable development in Africa, concern was expressed over the absence of adequate institutional arrangements for development planning in the 1990's in many African countries in general and the inability to formulate annual rolling plans and programmes by the African governments in particular.

In the area of regional economic cooperation and integration in Africa, concerns were expressed over the failure of past and current initiatives, the need to clearly identify the real beneficiaries, the potential costs to South Africa of joining integration schemes (e.g. SADC), the engagement of South Africa in regional integration efforts given the small size of national markets in the region and whether in fact the country could not look for markets elsewhere. Overall, all the foregoing issues and questions were intended to shed light on many areas where South Africa intends to develop some initiatives and partnership agreements with Southern Africa in particular and the rest of the continent in general.

To the extent that the economies of the African countries are open, their long-term development, as clearly pointed out during the seminars, has increasingly since the 1980s been influenced by the rapid changes in the international economic, financial and commercial environment. Such changes have included the retreat from global economic cooperation to

bilateralism, evolution of new trading systems (UNCTAD/WTO), establishment of regional trading blocks, globalisation of financial and banking institutions, mounting external debt, decreasing financial resource flows (both official loans and private direct investment) and the increasing attention paid to the Eastern Europeans by the Western countries and major multilateral financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank.

As a result of the real and potential impact of the changes in the international environment on the long-term development of Africa, a considerable number of issues and questions were raised by the different constituencies. Specifically, the participants sought explanations for the shift of development assistance from Africa to Eastern Europe by the Western countries and multilateral financial institutions. In addition, questions concerning the operationality and impact of globalisation and liberalisation of the world economy on African development and the type of policy actions needed to counteract such negative effects were raised by the participants.

Regarding the leadership role which South African is expected to play in the development of African countries in general and in the Southern African subregion in particular, participants raised pertinent questions and issues regarding that role and the future relations of the country with the continent. Specifically, fear was expressed by some participants that South Africa might be seen by the other African countries as dominating its neighbours and the rest of the continent. Furthermore, concern was expressed over the potential negative effect of the determinant role of South Africa in promoting regional economic cooperation and integration in Southern Africa.

There is no doubt that these issues and questions were raised to assess the capacity of South Africa in providing the leadership role in the development of the continent and at the sometime to avoid the mistakes and pitfalls made by many African countries during the negotiations, design and implementation of the structural adjustment and stabilisation programmes which have been initiated and supported by The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund since the 1980's.

V. MISSION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of promoting and enhancing the leadership role of South Africa in the development of the African continent by the ECA cannot be over emphasised considering the rapid and profound changes which have been taking place in the international economic, financial and trading environment in recent years. All these changes, which were examined extensively during the seminars would certainly produce a negative impact on African development in general and the capacity of many African States to design and implement effective macroeconomic reform programmes in particular. The shift of international attention towards Eastern Europe has increased Africa's marginalisation and weakened the continents's economic and financial position.

There is also the emerging world of trading blocs : Europe 1992; North American Free Trade Agreement, the ASEAN Free Trade Area, etc which have also tended to marginalise Africa. Confronted with this undesirable situation, it is vital for the other African countries and South Africa in particular to transcend economic calculations of gains and losses from European integration, the world of trading blocs and the globalisation of the world economy.

It is important, therefore, that future attention should be focused on the African continent, during the decade of the 1990s and beyond into the Twenty - First Century. This is important because at the end of the day, it is the rest of Africa and South Africa which can make themselves relevant or irrelevant. There is need to articulate a common strategic agenda for both South Africa and the rest of the continent. This will require total cohesion and unity of purpose.

This could enhance the competition of South Africa and the other African countries in the international economic, financial and trading arena. To the extent that there exists a common destiny between South Africa and the rest of the continent, there is need for bringing together the political and socio-economic forces towards achieving rapid socio-economic transformation and sustainable development of the entire continent.

In the view of the mission, the reintegration of South Africa into the African economy would produce a long-term positive impact that could enhance the necessary socio-economic transformation and fundamental change. The ECA should play a vital role, within the framework of its mandate, in providing the appropriate mechanisms and institutional support for the coordination of economic cooperation ventures between South African and the other African countries; and by so doing promote the leadership role of the former in the overall development of the continent.

ANNEX I
MISSION TO SOUTH AFRICA (1-13 OCTOBER 1996)
PROGRAMME SCHEDULE OF SEMINARS

Title of Seminar	Date & Time	Place	Host
1. Macro-Economics and Policy Reforms in Africa.	Wednesday 2/10/96 10:00 hrs	Foreign Service Institute, Pretoria	Mr. Hannes SPIES
2. UNCTAD and WTO within the Context of Globalization and Liberalization of the World Economy: Dangers and Challenges of Free Trade Agreements for Africa and South Africa.	Wednesday (2/10/96) 12:45 hrs	Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwaterand, Johannesburg	Prof. Fred Ahwireng-OBENG
3. The Lagos Plan of Action and the Future of Regional Cooperation and Integration in Africa.	Thursday (3/10/96) 14.15 hrs	Department of Economics, University of Stellenbosch, Western Cape	Prof Servaas van den Berg
4. The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment on the Economic Development of Africa	Friday (4/10/96) 14:00 hrs	School of Economics, University of Cape Town	Mr. Anthony BLACK
5. A Critical Assessment of Macro-Economic Management in Africa and Future Challenges in the Context of a changing International Economy.	Monday (7/10/96) 12:15 hrs	Economic Research Unit, University of Natal, Durban	Prof. Gavin MAASDORP
6. Regional Integration in Southern: The Role of the Economic Commission for Africa.	Tuesday (8/10/96) 12:45 hrs	The Africa Institute of South Africa, Pretoria	Dr. Denis VENTER
7. Regional Integration in Southern Africa: The Role of the Economic Commission for Africa.	Wednesday (9/10/96) 10:00 hrs	The South Africa Reserve Bank, Pretoria	Dr. Johan Van den HEEVER
8. A Critical Assessment of Macro-Economic Management in Africa and Future Challenges in the Context of a Changing International Economy.	Thursday (10/10/96) 15:00 hrs	Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg	Dr. Steven FRIEDMAN
9. Macroeconomic Sectoral Planning within a Developing Regional Integration Arrangement: The Southern African Development Community.	Friday (11/10/96) 14:00 hrs	Development Bank of Southern Africa, Midrand	Mr. Chris HEYMAN

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