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REPORT OF THE MEETING TO DETERMINE ASSISTANCE
FROM THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES FOR THE
FEASIBILITY STUDIES OF THE TRANS-AFRICAN HIGHWAY

Addis Ababa, 9-12 October 1972

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INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting to determine assistance from the industrialized countries for the feasibility studies of the Trans-African Highway was held at Addis Ababa from 9 to 12 October 1972.

Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Governments of Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Sweden, the United States of America, as well as by representatives of the African Development Bank (ADB), the Commission of the European Economic Community - the European Development Fund (EDF) - and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

Opening of meeting

3. Mr. Robert Gardiner, Executive Secretary of ECA, welcomed the participants. In his opening statement he observed that the Trans-African Highway project was rather unique in that it afforded the opportunity to get the developed countries and international financing institutions together, first to examine the idea and now to discuss its implementation. He stressed how important it was for the project to succeed, because the experience gained from would be of great value to everybody interested in the project.

4. Mr. Mamadou Aw, Special Adviser to the Executive Secretary, reported on the activities covered since the meeting of the Trans-African Highway Co-ordinating Committee, held at Bangui in April 1972. He pointed out that the Committee had adopted the alignment of the TAH and the work programme to be undertaken by the TAH Bureau. He said that due attention should also be given to the recommendations made by the neighbouring countries to the TAH when they met at Addis Ababa from 12 to 15 September 1972. In conclusion, he hoped that the offers made would be sufficient to implement the feasibility studies of the whole TAH project.

Adoption of agenda

5. The following agenda was adopted:

- (1) Opening of meeting
- (2) Adoption of the agenda
- (3) Organization of the meeting
- (4) Papers by the Trans-African Highway Bureau
- (5) Discussion
- (6) Other business
- (7) Adoption of the report

Organization of meeting

6. The following working hours were adopted:

10:00 - 1:00 p.m.; 3:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Papers by the Trans-African Highway Bureau

7. The TAH Bureau presented seven papers: one was entitled Report on the Current Status of the Trans-African Highway (document E/CN.14/TRANS/74) and the remaining six documents described in greater detail the current status of the TAH and the actions required thereon in each of the six countries traversed by the Trans-African Highway. These papers indicated in as practical a manner as possible, what ECA expected from the industrialized countries and international financing institutions in the undertaking of feasibility studies of the Trans-African Highway.

8. In addition to the aforementioned documents, two other papers: "Trans-African Highway - Terms of Reference for Feasibility Study" (E/CN.14/TRANS/67) and the Report of the Meeting on Feeder Links to the Trans-African Highway (E/CN.14/572 - E/CN.14/TRANS/75), were also made available to the meeting.

9. The meeting agreed that the documents presented by the TAH Bureau be discussed in three parts as follows:

- (a) the current status of the TAH (seven documents);
- (b) the terms of reference for the feasibility study of the TAH (E/CN.14/TRANS/67); and
- (c) the report of the meeting on feeder links to the TAH (E/CN.14/572 - E/CN.14/TRANS/76).

(a) Current status of the TAH

Kenya

10. The TAH section in Kenya was bitumen surfaced, but plans were under way for the widening and strengthening of the pavement (E/CN.14/TRANS/81).

11. The representative of the United Kingdom Government stated that there was already a British research team in Kenya studying the interaction of road construction and maintenance and vehicle operating costs. He pointed out that two specific studies were being carried out; the first was concerned with precise information on the maintenance cost of bitumen surfaced and gravel surfaced roads, while the second was a study of the lives of roads with a view to determining the most suitable thickness for strengthening the pavement.

Uganda

12. The TAH section in Uganda was an all-weather road, but plans were under way for the reconstruction of most parts of it. (E/CN.14/TRANS/82).

13. The representative of the secretariat informed the meeting that in accordance with the decision taken at the second meeting of the TAH Co-ordinating Committee, held at Bangui in April 1972, an ECA mission had visited Uganda to discuss the routing of the TAH through that country. He said that it was agreed that the Malaba - Kampala - Fort Portal - Kasindi route be designated as the TAH section in Uganda. He pointed out that the Government attached much importance to the improvement of the Kampala - Fort Portal - Kasindi section and that it was on the list of national priorities.

Zaire

14. The TAH section in Zaire consisted of an earth road, generally poorly maintained, and there was need for carrying out feasibility study for the whole length (E/CN.14/TRANS/79).
15. The representative of Japan said that his Government was ready to undertake the feasibility study of the Kisangani - Bangassou section. He added that his Government would like to receive an official request.
16. The representative of Belgium stated that he did not wish to prejudice the decision which was yet to be taken by the Belgium Minister for Development Co-operation, but, since the Government of Japan had expressed its willingness to assume responsibility for the feasibility study of the Kisangani - Bangassou section, he felt that the possibility of Belgium assuming responsibility for the feasibility study of a section - very probably between Kasindi and Kisangani would be given favourable consideration.
17. With regard to document E/CN.14/TRANS/79 relating to the highway in Zaire, however, the feasibility study proposed seemed too detailed, particularly as far as the technical portion was concerned; what in fact, was called for was a complete pre-project dossier containing all the plans. It was obvious that the cost of such a feasibility study would be greater than the normal cost of studies for which the technical element is much less elaborate.
18. The estimates in the summary table of document E/CN.14/TRANS/79 gave the figure of 355,000 Zaires for the feasibility studies of the 793 km between Kasindi and Kisangani. According to the information available to him these studies should cost no more than 158,600 Zaires. The Belgium representative felt therefore that the terms of document E/CN.14/TRANS/67 "Trans-African Highway terms of reference for feasibility study" should be reviewed. With regard to the engineering studies, the estimates shown in the document amounted to 948,000 Zaires, while according to his criteria, they should be in the region of 793,000 Zaires (US\$1,903,200), instead of the 1,303,000 Zaires (US\$2,606,000) shown in the document.

Central African Republic

19. The representative of the secretariat informed the meeting that the reservation made at the Bangui meeting by the Governments of Zaire and CAR with regard to the routing of the TAH had now been sorted out and it had been agreed that the TAH would cross the Zaire/CAR frontier at Bangassou (E/CN.14/TRANS/77).
20. The representative of EDF informed the meeting that the Fund's services proposed to contact the finance decision-making authorities with regard to the asphaltting of the Damara - Sibut section in the coming months.
21. The French delegation confirmed its earlier commitments, namely:
 - (i) To place a permanent expert at the disposal of the Trans-African Highway Bureau;
 - (ii) To undertake the feasibility studies of the Garoua Boulai - Baoro section (217 km), in accordance with the statements made at the Bangui meeting.

22. In addition, and following Anglo-French consultations, the French Government was prepared to participate with the United Kingdom Government in the studies concerning the movement of individuals and goods and the regulation of road traffic in the six countries through which the Trans-African Highway was to pass.

23. In respect of the feasibility studies on the Garoua Boulai - Baoro section, an extension of the Foumban-Garoua Boulai section which the German and Italian Governments were concerned with, the French Government felt that co-ordination between the experts of the three countries was essential. Contacts had already been made with a view to determining the nature of this co-operation, and the three Governments hoped to be able to reach agreement rapidly.

24. The representative of the IBRD stated that the World Bank had financed road maintenance projects in the Central African Republic. He also stated that the Bank was in possession of the preliminary findings of the technical studies relating to the Bangui-Bossembélé section, and that it would reach a decision with regard to the financing very shortly.

Cameroon

25. The type of studies required to be carried out on the TAH section in Cameroon were presented in document E/CN.14/TRANS/78.

26. The representative of the Federal Republic of Germany said that his Government was prepared to contribute to the TAH project in two ways:

- (i) The German Government had agreed to meet the formal request of the Republic of Cameroon to undertake a feasibility study of the Foumban - Tibati section of the TAH; and
- (ii) Steps had already been taken to provide the services of a highway expert, who would be attached to the TAH Bureau within the shortest possible period.

27. With regard to the feasibility study, the German delegation had proposed - and this met the consent of the meeting - to adapt the terms of reference to the particular characteristics of a given road section.

28. As far as the problems with regard to the adjacent sections were concerned, the German delegation shared the view that means of co-operation and co-ordination at the operational level should be found. It was suggested that the different consultants engaged should co-operate under terms yet to be defined.

29. The representative of the African Development Bank stated that the Bank had received a formal request from the Government of Cameroon, and was considering financing the feasibility and preliminary engineering studies of the Bamenda Mamfe - Ekok section of the TAH in Cameroon. The Bank hoped to finance these studies on a grant basis from technical assistance funds expected to be made available to it by USAID. The Bank had already taken practical steps in this direction and was planning to send a reconnaissance mission to Cameroon to inspect the road section, collect additional data, and draw up draft terms of reference for the studies.

30. The representative of the European Development Fund informed the meeting that tenders had been invited for the work on the Bafoussam-Bamenda section and that the bids were to be opened very shortly.

31. The representative of the IBRD said that the studies financed by the Bank of the Foumban-Pont du Noun section, which were under way, were expected to be completed by early next year.

32. The representative of Italy stated that his Government had agreed to finance the final engineering of the Meidouougou-Tibati section for which a total amount of 100 million lire (US\$180,000) had been earmarked. In addition, his Government was willing to consider the possibility of its participation in the financing of the feasibility studies for the sections to be constructed, in the light of the offers which had already been made by certain countries. In this connexion, he hoped that the discussions opened with the representatives of France and Germany on the necessity and possibility of co-ordinating the work of the firms designated by each country to carry out feasibility studies on the Fouban-Tibati and Meidouougou-Baoro sections would produce a positive result.

Nigeria

33. The road condition of the TAH section in Nigeria was presented in document E/CN.14/TRANS/80. The Ekok - Abakaliki section (206 km) needed feasibility and engineering studies.

(b) Terms of reference

34. The terms of reference for the feasibility study of the TAH project (E/CN.14/TRANS/67) were examined. After some discussions it was agreed that:

- (i) The terms of reference drawn up by the TAH Bureau should be considered as general guidelines for the preparation of the detailed terms of reference;
- (ii) Detailed terms of reference should be prepared for each section of the Trans-African Highway assigned to a particular enterprise;
- (iii) These terms of reference should be harmonized as far as possible, particularly in the case of adjacent sections;
- (iv) The donor countries and international organizations should be allowed to propose to the TAH Bureau the terms of reference to be applied to the section for which they were responsible;
- (v) The final report should contain all the information necessary to enable the financing institutions to adopt a position with regard to the financing of the work and, in particular, to estimate their cost to within 20 per cent;
- (vi) The final report might also include the terms of reference of the engineering studies, together with estimates of their cost and the time required for completion.

35. The representative of United Kingdom said that the TAH Bureau should take the necessary steps to protect the wider concept of the international nature of the project. He supported the idea of counterparts participating in the

feasibility studies and further suggested that the number of experts should, if possible, be matched by counterpart staff.

36. The representative of France pointed out that it would be very costly to divide the feasibility studies into two separate stages with an interval of two months during which the level of activity of the experts would be greatly reduced. He proposed that this procedure be replaced by the conventional procedure which called for a provisional report to be submitted to the overseeing agency on completion of the mission, before publication of the final report.

37. The representative of IBRD recommended that:

- (i) In respect of those sections which actually performed the function of international highways, the attention of the consultants be drawn to the international traffic study (a study which presented special difficulties);
- (ii) The consultants be requested to evaluate, within the context of each country highway development plan, the relative priority of the work which they would recommend to be carried out on the section of the Trans-African Highway under consideration.

38. Some delegates, supported by the TAH Bureau, believed that an investigation of how the different road sections fitted into the respective national development plans of the African countries would, at this stage, be rather inappropriate since a decision had been taken to undertake feasibility studies, the end result of which would be to prove or disprove the economic and technical viability of each road section.

(c) Feeder links

39. The representative of the secretariat introduced the report of the meeting on feeder links, held at Addis Ababa from 12 to 15 September 1972, (E/CN.14/572 - E/CN.14/TRANS/76).

40. He pointed out that at the ECA First Ministerial Conference, held at Tunis in February 1971, it was decided that the Mombasa-Lagos TAH project should pass through six countries. ^{1/} However, many of the neighbouring States had expressed their wish to be associated with the project by having feeder links to the TAH. In view of this, and in line with the work programme drawn up by the TAH Co-ordinating Committee, the TAH Bureau had prepared a preliminary study of the feeder links to the TAH (E/CN.14/TRANS/68) which was the basis for discussion at the September meeting. (Copies of this document were provided to participants).

41. In response to a question raised in connexion with the methodology followed in selecting the feeder links, the representative of the secretariat said that they were selected because either they represented the only link possible or, in cases where there were alternates, were thought suitable in the light of discussions held, wherever possible, with the countries concerned. It was stressed that the document contained a minimum of information and it was hoped that it would be brought up to date.

^{1/} Kenya, Uganda, Zaïre, Central African Republic, Cameroon and Nigeria.

42. The Belgian representative stated that Rwanda had requested his country to consider the study for the improvement of the Kigali-Ruhengeri road, the extension of which would link up with the Trans-African Highway in Uganda. He also pointed out that UNDP had financed the studies of the Ruhengeri - Gisenyi section and that the request for financing the construction of this road had been submitted to the IBRD.

43. The EDF representative informed the meeting that one of the approved feeder links in Zaïre - the Bukavu - Kisangani section - was included in his programme of work and that the studies relating to it had been commenced with a credit from Belgium.

44. Referring to document E/CN.14/TRANS/76 "Report of the Meeting on Feeder Links to the Trans-African Highway", the EDF representative pointed out that the statements made by certain "associated States" and in particular by Chad, called for observations which could be communicated later by the EDF to the Trans-African Highway Bureau.

45. A number of participants, supported by the Trans-African Highway Bureau, drew the attention of the Co-operating organizations and countries to the necessity of finding a solution to the problem of feeder-links to the Trans-African Highway. The participants were invited by the Bureau to consider the information which had been communicated to them on this matter, and to which further information would be added later, so as to be in a position to make concrete proposals at the next meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee in April 1973 with regard to the launching of the studies of feeder-links.

Prospects of assistance: Recapitulation of the offers made by countries and organizations

46. The statements made by the representatives of the developed countries and organizations in connexion with the assistance for the feasibility studies may be summarized as follows:

- (i) The Government of Belgium would consider in principle to undertake the feasibility study of the Kasindi - Kisangani section in Zaïre, provided that a formal request is received and that such request is approved by the appropriate Belgian authorities;
- (ii) The Government of Japan would undertake the feasibility study of the Kisangani (Zaïre) to Bangassou (CAR) section;
- (iii) The Government of France would carry out the feasibility study of the Baoro-Garoua Boulai section in the Central African Republic;
- (iv) The Government of Italy had agreed to finance the final engineering design of the Meidouougou-Tibati section in Cameroon. It had also expressed its interest to finance the feasibility study of the Meidouougou-Garoua Boulai section, but it would like to receive a formal request;
- (v) The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany had agreed to undertake the feasibility study of the Foumban-Tibati section in Cameroon;

- (vi) The African Development Bank had received a formal request from the Government of Cameroon and was considering financing the feasibility and preliminary engineering studies of the Bamenda-Mamfé-Ekok section of the Trans-African Highway in Cameroon;
- (vii) The representative of the United States said that his Government had received an application from the African Development Bank to approve the use of United States grant aid extended to the Bank for financing the feasibility and preliminary engineering services of the Bamenda-Mamfe-Nigerian border link of the TAH in Cameroon. The United States had agreed in principle to this application from the African Development Bank, with final approval contingent upon careful analysis of the results of the reconnaissance study of the road link to be undertaken by the AFDB in the next 60-90 days, AID replenishment of the AFDB grant, and subsequent approval of the terms of reference, selection of the contractor and final contract award.

47. The representative of the United Kingdom recalled that at the last meeting of the Committee in Bangui his country had made known its intention to finance the cost of the study of:

- (i) International travel and trade; and
- (ii) Of road traffic and vehicle regulations recommended in the pre-feasibility study of the Trans-African Highway. Subsequently the French Government had expressed an interest, which was warmly welcomed, of co-operating in the proposed study. The United Kingdom Government in closest consultation with the French Government would now expedite action so that detailed terms of reference could be submitted to the Trans-African Highway Bureau so that the study could be completed as soon as possible.

48. The United Kingdom representative reaffirmed his Government's preparedness to provide advice and assistance from the Overseas Unit of the United Kingdom Transport and Road Research Laboratory both to the Trans-African Highway Bureau and to the African countries concerned. He drew particular attention to the paper entitled "The application of terrain evaluation to the Trans-African Highway project" prepared by the Overseas Unit and presented at the Second African Highway Conference in Rabat in April 1972. The data and methodology given in the paper would be of assistance at all stages of the planning and construction of the highway.

49. The representative of IBRD said that the Bank could collaborate with the Highway Bureau in the preparation of the draft terms of reference and in the supervision of the studies, principally by sending on mission the transport experts attached to its offices at Nairobi and Abidjan.

50. The representative of the European Development Fund stated that the EDF could assist in the preparation of the provisional terms of reference principally by formulating observations or comments.

51. As a result of all these offers of assistance, 2,680 km of highway will be covered by the studies called for as part of the current phase of the project, only 800 km are not covered by an undertaking on the part of the

donor countries and international organizations. These 800 km are distributed as follows:

Nigeria: Abakaliki-Ekok (206 km);

Central African Republic: Baoro-Bossembélé (240 km) and Bambari-Bangassou (354 km).

52. The representative of the African Development Bank suggested that the donor countries and financing institutions should be given more time to examine additional data about the feeder links and that their declaration for assistance for these links, which were also as important as the TAH project, should be made at the next meeting of the TAH Co-ordinating Committee, scheduled to be held at Mombasa from 10 to 14 April 1973.

53. The representative of the Federal Republic of Germany informed the participants that his country, together with France and Italy, inspired by the example of co-operation among African countries as currently demonstrated by the Trans-African Highway project, had decided to co-ordinate their efforts to establish some form of co-operation, the details of which would be worked out at a meeting to be held in Paris in November 1972.

This co-operation should:

- (a) Permit savings through the reduction of general costs;
- (b) Facilitate uniformity in the feasibility studies;
- (c) Make it easier to approach the financing institutions for the next phase of the project.

54. He went on to say that he hoped this form of co-operation between his country, France and Italy would snowball and that other countries and financing institutions would join with them so as to accelerate the strengthening of the Trans-African Highway Bureau and expedite the implementation of the project. He pointed out that the research bureau of the three countries would receive proposals for collaboration, in fields yet to be determined, during the November meeting.

55. In his closing address, Mr. Gardiner expressed his satisfaction at the statements of the delegate from the Federal Republic of Germany and thanked the participants for the substantial offers that they had made, on behalf of their respective organizations and countries, in respect of the implementation of the Trans-African Highway project. He also thanked the members of the Trans-African Highway Bureau for the work they had done, which had enabled the industrialized countries and the international organizations to appreciate assistance needs so readily.

Adoption of the report

56. The report was adopted by the meeting on 12 October 1972.