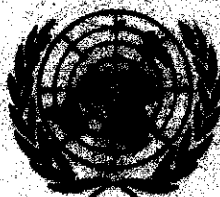


Sixteenth session of the Commission - Seventh meeting of the Conference of Ministers  
responsible for Economic Planning and Development  
Freetown (Sierra Leone), 6 - 11 April 1981

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Second meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole  
Freetown (Sierra Leone), 24 March - 2 April 1981

**PROGRESS REPORT ON  
THE AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER TECHNICAL  
TRAINING AND RESEARCH, NAIROBI**



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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
Second meeting of the Technical  
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Freetown, 24 March - 2 April 1981

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
Seventh meeting of the Conference  
of Ministers  
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## I. Introduction

The African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research, based in Nairobi, was established by ECA Conference of Ministers its resolution 348 (XIV) adopted at Rabat on 27 March 1979. Paragraph 5(h) of that resolution requested the Executive Secretary to submit to each meeting of the Conference of Ministers progress reports on the establishment and operation of the Institute.

## II. Establishment of the Institute

An intergovernmental expert group meeting was held in Addis Ababa from 22 to 27 November 1978 to consider the findings and recommendations of the report of a field study early in 1978 to determine the need for a post-secondary technological training and research institution and the potentials of existing national institutions in providing a base for its development. Fifteen member States sent representatives to the meeting which adopted a draft resolution for adoption by ECA Conference of Ministers which strongly recommended the proposal and called for the immediate establishment of the Institute.

Following the adoption of resolution 348 (XIV) by which the Conference decided that an African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research should be established forthwith, the secretariat convened a meeting of Plenipotentiaries in Addis Ababa from 23 to 25 July 1979 to consider and adopt a constitution for the Institute and decide on its location. The meeting was attended at senior and ministerial level by representatives of Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mali, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, the Sudan, Uganda, the Upper Volta and Zaire, while the United Republic of Cameroon participated in an observer capacity. The Plenipotentiaries considered the draft constitution and adopted it with amendments as the Constitution of the Institute. On that occasion, the Constitution was signed by the Plenipotentiaries of seven countries, namely Ghana, Kenya, Egypt, the Upper Volta, Mali, the Niger and Senegal. As of 30 November 1980, Nigeria had signed the Constitution, bringing the total to eight.

The above meeting noted that only seven of the required 13 signatories to the Constitution had been obtained at the time and, although the other member States which had sent representatives to the meeting needed a little more time to subscribe to the Constitution, they were none the less genuinely interested in having the Institute established. It therefore resolved that the first session of the Governing Council of the Institute should be held immediately. This was done in Addis Ababa from 25 to 27 July 1979. The Council proceeded to elect its officers, adopted its rules of procedure, decided that Kenya would host the Institute and approved a budget for the Institute for the period 1979/80. The reports of both the meeting of plenipotentiaries and the meeting of the Governing Council were subsequently sent to all member States with an invitation from the ECA Executive Secretary on 29 January 1980 requesting States that have not yet done so to subscribe to the Constitution of the Institute and make their contributions to its budget as soon as possible.

The second session of the Governing Council was held in Nairobi (Kenya), from 14 to 17 May 1980. At that session, although attendance fell much short of expectations, a considerable number of management decisions were taken. The host Government, Kenya, was able to reaffirm its total commitment to give the Institute the support and assistance needed to ensure its success and viability. This support, the Council was assured, included the granting of 300 acres of land for the Institute's permanent site, free use of the training and research facilities of several Kenyan institutions during the early years of the Institute before it acquired its own permanent facilities, and the provision of temporary accommodation. The Council considered and approved the 1980/81 budget for the Institute and appointed the Director-General of the Institute. It also called on all member States to give the Institute their fullest support, subscribe to the Constitution and pay their contributions. It considered and approved candidatures for the Academic Board and elected an Executive Committee of the Council composed as follows:

Members of the Academic Board

<u>Subregion</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Country</u>
East	1. Mr. Philip M. Githinji	Kenya
	2. Mr. John Mwabula	Zambia
West	3. Mr. Abderhamane Baba Toure	Mali
	4. Mr. N.J. Garber	Sierra Leone
North	5. Mr. Mahdi Elmandjra	Morocco
	6. Mr. Benini Abdelivhab	Algeria
Central	7. Mr. Ngwaba Muyolo	Zaire
	8. Mr. Ngandjui Cyprian	United Republic of Cameroon

Members of the Executive Committee (through July 1981)

Chairman	:	Nigeria
Vice-Chairman	:	Upper-Volta
East Africa	:	Kenya
West Africa	:	Nigeria
Southern Africa	:	Mozambique
Central Africa	:	Zaire
North Africa	:	Algeria

The meeting deferred the appointment of the Institute's core staff until the Selection Committee had met to review candidatures in August and it delegated the appointment of core staff to the Executive Committee. Members of the Council visited the actual site for the permanent buildings of the Institute after the close of business. The report (CC/SR.2/80) of the meeting has been sent to all member States.

### III. Technical feasibility studies

With funds provided by UNDP, the secretariat initiated action for carrying out detailed technical studies on the design, mission and requirements of the Institute. Of the many consultancy firms that offered their services, Educansult of Toronto, Canada, was selected in September 1979 to undertake the studies and prepare a master plan for the Institute. Intensive consultations were held with ECA secretariat, the Kenyan Government and with other bodies, and full-scale studies began by the second half of January 1980. The ECA team was invited to Canada by Educansult in July to see for themselves the operations of Community Technical Colleges with training programmes oriented to the real needs of industries, agriculture and other occupations, the close co-operation between industries and these colleges and the scope of a production factory, all of which provided experience and principles for the design of the African Institute. The ECA team also participated in detailed discussions on the design of curricula and requirements in terms of facilities, equipment, etc. The study cost the United Nations \$US 150,000. Two copies each of the study report and master plan of the Institute were distributed to the concerned ministries of all member States and to co-operating agencies and organizations in October 1980.

In addition, background documents, including certified copies of the Constitution, the scale of contributions, the philosophy, design and mission of the Institute, as well as initial courses and programmes of the Institute have all been made available to every member State.

### IV. Preparatory meetings and missions

A number of preparatory meetings and missions have been initiated since 1979 so that the Institute may begin to operate its training programmes as from January 1981 (now not feasible because of lack of funds and membership).

The Selection Committee met in Addis Ababa in October 1979, and in Nairobi May and August 1980. As a result of these meetings, several qualified African and non-African candidates have been short-listed and recommended to the Executive Committee for appointment as soon as funds became available. Besides lack of funds with which to offer appointments, the search for very competent African technical personnel has been constrained by the low response to advertisements by French-speaking African candidates. This handicap has singularly held up the recruitment of a Deputy Director-General.

The Academic Board attempted to meet in August 1980 and again from 1 to 6 October 1980 but attendance on each occasion was poor. The Board at its second meeting fully reviewed the initial training courses and programmes proffered to it by the Governing Council and advised the Director-General on normal academic matters.

The Executive Committee twice attempted to meet in August 1980 and again on 24 and 25 November 1980. On each occasion it failed to achieve the required quorum and consequently could not carry out its duties. The resulting informal meetings discussed the seriousness of the impasse the Institute was experiencing. The constraints arose from many sources, chief of which were: the regular absence from meetings of many country delegations appointed to help to make the Institute operational; the failure of the Executive Committee to carry out its duties; the failure of member States effectively to support the Institute by subscribing to the Constitution and paying their contributions; the Institute's lack of funds to recruit the core staff with which to initiate its initial training courses. At the informal meeting in November participants agreed that the situation was grave and consequently an extraordinary meeting of the Governing Council should be convened by ECA to review certain constitutional provisions and elect new officers willing to serve the Institute.

Consultative field missions were undertaken by the Director-General in June/July 1980 before he assumed office and again in December 1980. The first was to Central and West Africa and the second to North Africa. The purpose of the missions was to provide on-the-spot briefings to the Ministers and senior officials concerned with the affairs of the Institute, explain the design and mission of the Institute, answer questions and urge membership and payment of contributions. In order to expedite the process countries becoming members of the Institute now that all member States have adequate information on the Institute, the secretariat plans to undertake another field mission in January/February 1981, this time to take the Constitution to member States for consideration and signature. The mission will cover 16 States in Eastern and Southern Africa. A similar mission to Central and West Africa is envisaged during the second quarter of 1981.

#### V. Financing the Institute

The initial \$US 50,000 for the actual establishment of the Institute was provided from the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development in the form of specific project grants by the Nigerian Government for the field studies and related meetings. UNDP, under the regional IPF, made funds available for the preparatory work. Because the Institute has not been able to generate capacity to utilize the grants, the ceiling of the UNDP allocation through 31 December 1981 has been reduced from \$US 1 million to \$US 675,000. To be able to utilize this allocation fully, the Institute must first have more signatory and paid-up member States and must have its core staff on its payroll. UNDP can provide technical advisers and equipment only when the Institute's own staff are there to be advised. This is the present impasse.

The Institute's current budget for 1980/81 as approved by the Governing Council in May 1980 is \$US 2,959,900. As of 30 November 1980, only Kenya (the host country) and Nigeria had paid their contributions, totalling only \$US 201,703, i.e. only about 6.8 per cent of the required funds. With such limited resources, the Institute cannot employ the core staff that it urgently needs, let alone bring students on board early in 1981. Member States cannot have the Institute operational without providing it with the means to do so. The urgency of the Institute becoming operational has been well articulated in the Lagos Plan of Action and the priority that plan attaches to technology and technical manpower is clear. In the opinion of the secretariat, it is not a lack of conviction or lack of will that is holding up the membership and funding of the Institute but rather a lack of information and rigidity in the administrative and decision-making processes that are the real sources of delay.

#### VI. Institute's buildings and equipment

The Institute is currently housed in temporary accommodation at the Kenya Polytechnic, Nairobi. One floor of an academic block has been released to the Institute by the host Government. Work on repartitioning the floor to serve as offices and storerooms for the Institute was started by November and was expected to be completed by the middle of December 1980. The Institute has placed orders for basic office furniture and typewriters. It is envisaged that the Institute will remain in its temporary location for at least two years.

ECA prepared and submitted to over 30 non-African Governments and about 20 donor organizations last October, project data submissions requesting technical co-operation in providing funds for the construction of the Institute's buildings and purchase of machinery and equipment. The requirements through 1985 totalled \$US 63.02 million, made up of \$US 45.44 million for buildings and construction and \$US 17.58 million for machinery and equipment. The nature of the mission and design of the technological institution have determined its cost; technological capability cannot be achieved on the cheap. Copies of the project documents have also been sent to all member States for their information.

The secretariat is following up on the request for capital grants. It therefore plans in collaboration with the Executive Committee of the Council of the Institute to organize a Pledging Conference in April or May 1981. African oil-exporting countries as well as the various non-African Governments and organizations to which the technical co-operation request has been sent will be invited to participate in the pledge and determine a schedule for the release of funds. Already some prospective donor Governments are showing signs of interest in the Institute. No doubt they would like to be convinced that African States are themselves strongly committed to the Institute before they indicate what level of support they are prepared to offer.

VII. Constraints to the establishment and development of the Institute

From the foregoing it is obvious that the main hurdle to the Institute's becoming immediately operational and beginning its initial training programmes by the second quarter of 1981 are the following:

- (a) The ineffectiveness of the Executive Committee in carrying out its assigned duties because member countries have repeatedly failed to attend meetings which have made it impossible for vital decisions to be made and staff to be recruited.
- (b) The delay in more member States subscribing to the Constitution of the Institute. As a regional institution and in compliance with Conference of Ministers resolution 348 (XIV) membership is open to all 50 African States and hardly any can afford not to participate in an institution that will train nationals to acquire the skills, capability and innovative mind for technology adaptation, application and development.
- (c) The undue delay in the payment of member States' contributions to the budget of the Institute even by States that have signed the Constitution nearly 18 months ago. Where foreign exchange is the constraint and a country is ready to pay in local currency to the secretariat could be so informed so that appropriate arrangements could be made.
- (d) The delay in the recruitment of the Institute's own core staff - Heads of Centres/Departments, Administration, Accounts, etc. - simply because the Institute lacked adequate funds. These two factors combined have also prevented the Institute from taking full advantage of the resources that UNDP has placed at its disposal.
- (e) The delay in the signing of the Institute's Headquarters Agreement as the Government of Kenya has been considering the matter since August 1979 and lately has raised certain amendments which would give the Institute less favoured treatment as compared to many other regional institutions sponsored by ECA.
- (f) The inadequate response of qualified and experienced French-speaking African engineers, technologists, technicians, technical educators and administrators to post advertisements in the Institute and the need for member States to encourage more nationals to offer their services to the Institute.



Recommendations

In order to eliminate the foregoing constraints and assist the Institute in getting its training, research and production programmes operational as soon as possible, the meeting is invited to:

- (a) Consider the apparent lack of commitment to the Institute on the **part** of member States and decide whether the Institute should operate or be abolished;
- (b) Should the Institute be retained and developed, urge all African States that have not yet subscribed to the Constitution of the Institute and paid their contributions to the 1980/81 budget of the Institute to do so as expeditiously as possible;
- (c) Request the Government of Kenya as host country to expedite the conclusion of the Headquarters Agreement with the Institute and treat the Institute in the same manner as other intergovernmental institutions that it hosts;
- (d) Urge all African States, particularly the French-speaking ones, to encourage their nationals to offer to serve the Institute;
- (e) Request African Governments in a position to do so to consider possible secondment of their nationals who are found suitable to fill posts at the Institute for an initial assistance period of six months during which time the salaries and service benefits of such nationals could be borne by the Governments releasing them;
- (f) Urge the Executive Secretary not to relent in his efforts to make the Institute operational as soon as possible and to mobilize resources for the Institute.

ANNEX

DRAFT RESOLUTION

THE AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER TECHNICAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH

The Conference of Ministers,

Reaffirming its resolution 348 (XIV) of 27 March 1979, paragraph 2 of which called for the immediate establishment of the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research as a regional institution in the service of all African States,

Conscious of the commitment made by African Heads of State and Government by the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action in April 1980 aimed at pursuing economic independence through co-operation and collective self-reliance,

Aware of the high priority that the Plan accorded to technology and technical manpower development for the achievement of sectoral development objectives and targets,

Convinced that the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research has a major role to play in developing African technological capabilities in the form of technical skills and innovative minds that are crucial in the strive for ultimate regional technological independence,

Satisfied with the special mission assigned to the Institute and with its philosophy and design for fulfilling its said mission,

Appreciative of the support and interim institutional facilities that the Government of the Republic of Kenya has extended to the Institute in order to make the latter become operational immediately,

Appreciative also of the financial assistance that the United Nations Development Programme has granted to the Institute for the preparatory work and hopeful of the further support of that Programme in the development of the Institute,

Seriously concerned over the starting difficulties facing the Institute and the fact that only a handful of African States have so far subscribed to the Constitution of the Institute and still fewer States have paid their contributions to its 1980/81 budget, both of which factors have made it extremely difficult for the Institute to become operational as soon as possible,

1. Calls upon all independent African States to give full and effective political, moral and financial support to the Institute and to sustain its establishment and development in every way;
2. Urges all African Governments that have not so far done so to subscribe to the Constitution of the Institute as a matter of top priority and pay their contributions to the budget of the Institute as expeditiously as possible;
3. Appeals to African States in a position to do so to consider possible secondment of qualified and experienced nationals to full posts at the Institute for an initial assistance period of six months during which time the salaries and service benefits of such nationals could be borne by the Governments releasing them;
4. Appeals also to the Government hosting the Institute to expedite the conclusion of the Institute's Headquarters Agreement under terms and conditions similar to those accorded to other regional intergovernmental organizations in the same country;
5. Requests the Executive Secretary to;
  - (a) convene as soon as possible an extraordinary meeting of the Governing Council of the Institute in order to resolve the difficulties facing the Institute and consider ways to make the management machinery of the Institute operate effectively;
  - (b) not to relent in his efforts to make the Institute operational as soon as possible and to mobilize resources for the Institute's buildings and equipment.