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Tenth Session;
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Tunis, 8-13 February 1971

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD
OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Bourse du travail, Tunis,
Friday, 12 February 1971, at 9.20 a.m.

CONTENTS: - Observers' statements (continued)

Chairman : Mr. P.N. Boundio Central African Republic
Executive Secretary : Mr. R.K.A. Gardiner
Secretary : Mr. L.K. Darboux

Corrections to this summary record should be signed by the delegation concerned and submitted in triplicate, to the Secretary of the Commission (UNECA, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa) not later than 30 April 1971.

Mr. KARIUKI (African training and research centre in administration for development - CAFRAD) stated that his organization had embarked on a stage of increased co-operation with ECA, which had provided experts for internal reorganization and advisers for two meetings. CAFRAD had presented UNDP with a request for aid from the Special Fund, to be administered by UNESCO and the Public Administration Division at Headquarters. It was hoped that this aid would materialize soon, as it would improve the Centre's capacity for action.

CAFRAD's mission was to conduct comparative studies and research into administrative problems connected with economic and social development in Africa, to organize meetings, seminars and in-service training courses, to assemble and distribute documents on African administrations, and to act as a liaison agency.

The programme of work for 1971 included the following activities: recruitment of experts, continuation and improvement of training of teachers of public administration, organization of working meetings of experts to determine the documentation and equipment required for future programmes.

Sixteen African countries were members of CAFRAD. Of course, a larger membership would permit better formulation of programmes, stimulate greater interest among possible subsidizing institutions and make it possible to increase resources and, consequently, the services which CAFRAD would be able to offer to the African continent.

Mr. LARBI (Maghreb Standing Consultative Committee) reminded the meeting that, since 1964, the Ministers of Economy had held six meetings. Some positive results had already been achieved, notably in the fields of postal and transportation communications and telecommunications. The Committee was maintaining close working relations with the ECA Sub-regional Office in Tangier.

ECA had made a valuable contribution to the implementation of the programme of the Committee which, within the framework of Africa's Strategy for Development, was in the process of preparing a draft intergovernmental agreement for economic co-operation within the Maghreb.

The 1970/71 programme of work included surveys of the development of trade within the Maghreb area and co-operation in the fields of agriculture, industry and financing, a transport plan, the preparation of a list of export products of common interest, and the resumption of statistical and national accounting records.

Mr. JHINKOW (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance), to supplement the information already given concerning the main activities of his organization, stated that CMEA had at first been primarily concerned with the problems of trade development, the organization of scientific and technological co-operation and the exchange of technical information between its member countries. Explaining the operation of CMEA, he stressed that members were at liberty to organize their trade and other forms of economic relations with countries outside the Maghreb, and to establish economic ties with any other country, irrespective of their economic and social systems, on a basis of equality, mutual advantage and non-intervention, while continuing the struggle against the policies of economic discrimination of certain Governments and economic groups.

CMEA wished to maintain still closer relations with United Nations agencies, particularly with ECA. Its member countries considered economic co-operation with Asia, Africa and Latin America as a factor which contributed to the economic independence and political progress of newly-formed States. By practising this principle, they had expanded their trade with developing countries 12.5 times between 1950 and 1969, and trade with Africa had quadrupled between 1960 and 1970. At present, they were providing economic and technical aid to a large number of newly formed developing countries, 27 of them in Africa, in which they had undertaken over one thousand industrial or other projects and had achieved a 50 per cent success rate. In addition, to meet the needs of developing countries, CMEA countries granted them low-interest long-term credit to pay for the economic assistance which they provided.

Nor did they claim ownership of the enterprises which they helped to establish, or try to control the economies of benefiting countries, or to acquire for themselves privileges which were incompatible with the sovereignty of these countries. Projects undertaken by the CMEA countries also enabled large numbers of local specialized technicians and workers to be trained. Thus, by continually strengthening their economic ties with the developing countries through long-term economic agreements, the members of CMEA helped these countries to accelerate their economic development by effective use of their domestic resources.

In conclusion, Mr. Jhinkow pointed out the importance of plans for long-term economic development and stressed the advantages offered to developing countries by the experience acquired by CMEA countries in the field of division of labour; the national economic plans of these countries had in fact, from the outset, been designed to promote specialization, as had co-operation in the field of production.

Mr. FRISCH (European Economic Community) broadly outlined his organization's financial and technical co-operation with the eighteen States belonging to the Yaoundé Convention. This Convention had been revised and Yaoundé Convention II had come into effect on 1 January 1971.

The volume of aid had increased steadily from 580 million dollars for the period 1958-1963, to 800 million dollars for 1964-1969, and was estimated to reach 1,000 million dollars in 1970-1975.

As far as sectoral priorities were concerned, the emphasis which had been placed on the economic and social infrastructure, had been shifted to the productive sectors, and the agricultural sector was now absorbing 40 per cent of the total aid.

A characteristic feature of the Association is that, in one agreement, it brings together, the whole range of measures necessary for the fight against under-development. As aid can be continued over a number of years, it can be incorporated into the development plans of the countries concerned. The associated States were, for the most part, among the least developed of the developing countries, and 80 per cent of the aid granted to them was of the non-repayable loan variety.

A special aid fund had been set up, which could be drawn on by countries affected by a fall in prices on the international market or stricken by national disaster. This is of particular advantage to countries with a single crop production.

The development of regional economic co-operation had been one of the main preoccupations of the authors of the Yaoundé Convention. African regional co-operation was an absolute necessity.

Mr. DIALLO (World Confederation and Labour) wished to emphasize the importance attached by his organization to the Second Development Decade in Africa. Workers, farmers and youth had been bitterly disappointed at the failure of the First Decade. A second disappointment would be disastrous.

The idea of holding the tenth session at ministerial level was a welcome innovation as it lent political weight to the measures taken to give momentum to national economies.

The World Confederation shared the views of ECA on the objectives for Africa during the Second Decade - that the concept of national self-sufficiency must be discarded and that the present international division of labour must be reconsidered.

The first item in the order of priorities of the WCL was to increase food production, but industrialization was also essential to provide work for the mass of the African labour force and to reduce unemployment.

Certain African peoples were still under colonial domination. It was to be hoped that the Second Development Decade would see their accession to independence; the OAU and ECA could make a useful contribution to this end.

Mr. KOCI (Observer for Czechoslovakia) said that his Government was following with great interest the successes achieved by African Countries under the active contribution of the ECA, particularly in the field of industrialization, which was the fundamental element to fully make use of their rich natural resources and manpower.

Czechoslovakia paid great attention to the development of bilateral trade with African countries, which had been increased by 110 per cent within the past 15 years. The total turnover of the mutual exchange of goods had risen from \$80 million in 1957 to \$166 million in 1970, and the imports of products and industrial goods manufactured by African countries had increased from a value of \$33 million in 1957 to \$65 million in 1970.

Czechoslovakia also granted long-term and short-term credits for the import of complete plants and machinery equipment, in compliance with the development plans of the respective countries. Technical assistance continued after the installation of plant, to provide for the training of management personnel and to ensure the full technical exploitation of equipment, using the most modern technology. Experts in the fields of medicine and education were being sent to Africa in accordance with bilateral agreements on technical and scientific co-operation.

The Czechoslovak Government was always ready to provide assistance in the field of planning for economic development.

Mr. SATT (Observer for Poland) recalled that his country was also in the process of development, and that, as such, it had encountered initial difficulties. As its economy was predominantly an agricultural one, it was obliged to import capital goods; its rural areas were over-populated, millions of its citizens had perished during the Second World War, and in addition its per capita income was \$200, lower than the current per capita income of Ghana. Development had been facilitated by trade between socialist countries. Poland was now beginning to trade with African countries.

In the field of technical assistance, Poland attached prime importance to vocational training; its universities and technical schools were attended by 2,000 students a year from the Third World.

Poland hoped to increase its contribution to development and to share its experience.

Mr. AFANASIEV (Observer for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that his country, which was assisting the peoples of Africa in their struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism, was gratified by their achievements in economic and social development.

Nevertheless, these countries were still suffering from the iniquities of neo-colonialist exploitation which were particularly apparent in the deterioration of the terms of trade and in the increasing burden of debt servicing which was currently in the order of \$6,000 million.

Strengthened by her own experience, the Soviet Union knew that the only means of achieving an accelerated economic growth was to emphasize progressive social structures and planning which took account of the interests of all sectors and entailed the maximum rational utilization of all resources. She therefore approved of the programme of the Second Development Decade, as had been shown by the joint statement of the socialist countries at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

The vital importance accorded to domestic resources did not imply that external sources of development financing should be rejected. Of these, external trade should occupy pride of place; the USSR, for its part, was ready to contribute to the normalization and growth of trade with the African countries on the basis of mutual advantages. The volume of trade between the USSR and the African countries had increased by 21 per cent and efforts would be made to stabilize export revenue by extending the use of trade stabilization agreements for raw materials. Developing countries must, furthermore, be granted general unilateral preferences, without discrimination, and all tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade must be lifted.

The Soviet Union, whose own development had taken place under more adverse conditions than those found in African countries, would always be ready to provide material aid to Africa on the basis of concrete and well-founded proposals. The USSR had concluded agreements for economic and technical co-operation with 20 African countries, involving the construction and reinforcement of 350 undertakings, 170 of which (including the Aswan dam and reservoir) were put into operation in 1970. The volume of long-term credits granted to African countries by the USSR currently exceeded 1,600 million roubles.

The Soviet Union had rendered considerable aid in the field of education and training. During the 1969/1970 academic year, more than 11,000 students from developing countries had received higher education in the USSR, while Lumumba University, which had been established at a relatively recent date, had trained 3,000 specialists including 600 Africans. Moreover, Soviet specialists had trained more than 75,000 skilled workers and technicians in the field.

From its inception, ECA had done a remarkable job in research, the dissemination of economic data and staff training, and it had contributed to extending the integration process. The Soviet Union approved the steps which the secretariat had taken to expand economic co-operation.

As its contribution to UNDP, the Soviet Union was prepared to participate in setting up a vocational and technical training centre, while Soviet bodies would be ready to carry out studies on African countries' development problems and to provide expertise on projects presented by ECA. At its request the Soviet Union could send Soviet metallurgical specialists to study the establishment of an East African institute for scientific research in the field of metallurgy and organize study tours and seminars on various technical questions, particularly for UNDP in the USSR in 1972 and 1973.

Mr. CICERON (Universal Postal Union) said that as from 1963 operational activities had complemented the standard-setting activities conducted by the UPU since it had been established in 1874. Its efforts were designed to serve three objectives: to provide more post offices, to improve mail routing and to ensure better financial services by the postal, telegraph and telephone services and the training of skilled personnel. A real effort was also being made in the matter of information.

In accordance with the general policy as defined at its Tokyo Congress, the UPU proposed to promote the advancement of underdeveloped countries. Its action was in various forms: studies on general or specific postal questions, field surveys, vocational training courses, seminars and refresher courses.

Africa benefited considerably from those programmes because in 1970 two out of four seminars for developing countries had been held in that region. The UPU had also helped to set up a training centre for medium-level staff at Abidjan and a savings bank in Ethiopia. Moreover, in ECA there was a UPU expert who was responsible for the study of postal problems in Africa.

The UPU's activities were based on the guidelines laid down by its Executive Council. African countries were widely represented on the Council and played an important part in working out the UPU's technical programme. The guidelines consisted mainly in establishing direct contact with countries; integrating the efforts of UNDP, the countries concerned and the recipient countries, and maintaining close co-operation with the ITU.

Moreover, owing to the special structure of the UPU, the regional organs - the Restricted Unions - were able to play an appreciable part in the planning and implementation of UPU projects.

The role of the Restricted Unions in no way hampered the UPU's co-operation with ECA. The UPU was particularly mindful of the views expressed in ECA's programmes of work, but felt that there should be consultation where postal matters were involved.

Mr. BROOK (International Telecommunication Union) said that it was not possible, in these days of rapid technical development, to consider African telecommunication in isolation. The long-term objective which should be kept in mind was that of an integrated system of telecommunications on a global scale. It was for that reason that the ITU had been created, as long ago as 1865, and the responsibilities of the ITU were enshrined in the International Telecommunications Convention.

The ITU carried out its mandate by organizing international conferences devoted to African problems and by maintaining close relations with African sub-regional organizations as well as with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity.

Those two bodies had held an important meeting on telecommunications, which had laid considerable emphasis on the urgency of a pan-African pre-investment survey to lay the basis for an efficient modern telecommunications network, on the need for seminars on management training and training in the higher telecommunication techniques, and on the importance of training in the context of technical development.

As far as the pre-investment survey was concerned, preliminary studies of the needs of all African countries had been completed. Contracts with international consultant engineering firms provided for detailed engineering and economic feasibility studies of the trunk telecommunications network in different parts of Africa.

Mr. Brook referred to the various seminars which had been organized by the ITU in Africa and said that a continuing series of seminars would be held in Africa at a rhythm of three or four a year.

In the field of training, the ITU had promoted the establishment of sub-regional training schemes. A complex providing training to a high technological level would be based on national and multinational schools in English-speaking and French-speaking countries. In two years' time, if all went well, there would be only two independent African countries which would not have received help of this kind.

As far as the future was concerned, the ITU intended to proceed with the practical implementation of the pan-African telecommunications network, and for that purpose it had established a committee consisting of representatives of six African countries to oversee the speedy execution of the project.

An ITU working group was currently meeting in Geneva to discuss Satellite Communications and related questions. The ITU would proceed with its programme of technical assistance within the framework of the United Nations Development Programme. Regional telecommunication advisers had been posted to various towns in Africa, to maintain close contact with the sub-regions. Finally, the speaker wished to mention that an advisory group at ITU headquarters was continually available on request by African countries.

The ITU wished to offer its full co-operation in ECA's work programme, whose priorities were in complete harmony with its own, in accordance with the definition of the responsibilities of each Organization as contained in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. ELAMLY (World Meteorological Organization) said that WMO co-operated closely with ECA. That co-operation had been mentioned as an example by the Administrative Co-ordinating Committee's Sub-Committee on Water Resources. WMO supported Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s and ECA's programme of work. It contemplated two parallel courses of action: to continue its co-operation with ECA, as it had done by seconding to the Commission's secretariat a hydro-meteorologist directly responsible to the Executive Secretary, and to help African countries achieve the aims of their strategy for development by providing them with facilities for implementing WMO's programme, in particular the World Weather Watch covered by ECA resolution 196(IX). The Observer for WMO said that his Organization had made the most modern instruments and techniques available to African countries so as to rationalize their meteorological services. This in itself was a notable achievement.

The Observer for WMO closed by saying that his Organization was greatly interested in two points of ECA's programme of work: the training of specialists in the development of water resources and ECA activities regarding the human environment.

Mr. DOO KINGUE (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that some of UNESCO's activities in Africa were being financed out of the Organization's budget while other activities were covered out of the very considerable extra-budgetary resources available.

In the priority field of education, UNESCO's policy in Africa had been formulated by conferences of African Ministers of Education jointly convened by UNESCO and ECA. The conference held in Addis Ababa in 1961 had drawn up a twenty-year education development plan which had been revised by UNESCO, the OAU and ECA following the Conference held in Nairobi in 1968. The revised plan, which was to be adopted at the next Conference, would be the basis for the development of education in Africa over the coming decade.

In the second priority field, namely the application of science and technology to development, a Conference of competent Ministers of African member States was scheduled to be held in 1973. Again, in the sector of social sciences, human sciences and culture, and in the field of information, in 1975 UNESCO was to organize a Conference of African Ministers responsible for culture and information. All UNESCO's activities in Africa would therefore have been planned by the middle of the decade, and this should enable the Organization to play an effective part in implementing the strategy for the Second Development Decade.

The Observer for UNESCO then mentioned some UNESCO projects such as the ten-year African general history project launched in 1965.

UNESCO had decentralized its operational and promotional activities through its Regional Office for Education in Dakar and its two Regional Offices for Science and Technology located in Cairo and Nairobi.

In closing, the Observer for UNESCO referred to some large-scale undertakings that concerned all developing countries. In the field of education, for example, a vast programme of educational renewal had been undertaken by the International Institute of Education Planning and the International Bureau of Education. UNESCO was co-operating with the ILO and IBRD to ensure a more systematic link between education and employment policies. The Director-General had recently set up an International Commission for Education Development which was to study the strategies adopted by States throughout the world. In the field of science and technology, too, UNESCO had launched medium-or long-term programmes such as the International Hydrological Decade. Lastly, UNESCO had taken part in the United Nations scientific programmes. Furthermore, after the International Education Year UNESCO had decided to proclaim 1972 International Book Year. The Observer for UNESCO said he was convinced that the programmes and projects, which did not concern Africa alone, would contribute to the region's development.

Mr. SAUNDERS (United Nations Development Programme) said that the Representatives of Ethiopia and Ghana and the Executive Secretary of ECA had made observations concerning the role of UNDP within the United Nations system.

The Consensus approved by the UNDP Governing Council and enshrined in General Assembly resolution 2688(XXV) contained the most comprehensive statement of policy by the Governing Council, which had studied the findings of the Jackson Report at great length.

The first main section of the Consensus dealt with country programming. It showed that the Government of the country concerned had the exclusive responsibility for formulating its programme, which should be based upon the national plans or objectives. The Observer for UNDP referred to paragraphs 5, 7 and 10 of the Consensus. The new system required the establishment of an indicative planning figure for each country. Some speakers had drawn attention to the requirements of the least developed countries, and it was evident that their concern was shared by the members of the Governing Council. The Consensus indicated (paragraph 18) that the initiative for the formulation of projects also rested with the countries concerned. Then there was the matter of inter-country programming.

Paragraphs 21, 22 and 23 of the Consensus lay down that assistance should be provided at the request of at least two Governments. The programming of such assistance would be based broadly on the same general principles as set out for country programming, subject to criteria and guidelines established by the General Council from time to time.

One of the major preoccupations of the General Council during the previous year had been to define the basis of estimated financial resources upon which planning and reorganization could proceed. After extensive discussion, the Council had decided that the net resources available for the field programme for the period 1972-1976 would be apportioned in the ratio of not less than 82 per cent for country programming and not more than 18 per cent for inter-country programming, in accordance with paragraph 25. The speaker regretted not being in a position to forecast what

funds would be available for Africa and what part of the funds would be handled by regional commissions, and in particular by ECA. He said that the net figures to which he had referred were reached after certain deductions from the total contributions, one of which deductions would be for the purpose of establishing a Programme Reserve. The amount accumulated under the heading of Programme Reserve would be used to meet the special needs of the least developed countries.

The Consensus provided that regional bureaux should be established at headquarters, each bureau to be headed by an official of the high qualifications and rank commensurate with those important responsibilities. There was already a director designate for the Regional Bureau for Africa. The new administrative provisions were to come into effect in May 1971.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.