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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH MEETING

held at Africa Hall, Addis Ababa,
on Saturday, 29 February 1964,
at 9.45 a.m.

CONTENTS:

Programme of Work and Priorities (concluded)
Date and place of Seventh Session (concluded)
Draft Resolutions

Participants wishing to have corrections made to this provisional summary record are requested to write them on a copy of the record and to send the corrected copy to the Translation Section, Room 60, as soon as possible. If necessary, the corrected copy may be sent by post (to the Translation Section, Economic Commission for Africa, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) after the session; in that case it should arrive not later than 30 April 1964.

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES (agenda item 10) (E/CN.14/267, 268, 264).

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY introduced the Programme of Work and Priorities for 1964-1965 (E/CN.14/267).

Ato BIRHANU WAKWAYA (Ethiopia) suggested that the Programme of Work and Priorities be adopted, with the proviso that the Executive Secretary be urged to take account of the Commission's comments and suggestions.

Further, the Executive Secretary should be authorized to work as closely as possible with the provisional Secretary-General of the Organization for African Unity. He invited the Commission to express its gratitude to all countries and organizations which had assisted the Executive Secretary in implementing the programme for 1963-1964.

The Commission expressed its gratitude by acclamation

Mr. KOHN (FAO), speaking on the invitation of the Chairman pointed out that the Programme of Work contained no mention of the meeting on agricultural credit for French-speaking African countries, which would be held in Dakar in 1965, of the meeting on special problems of agricultural planning in Africa, which would also be held in 1965, probably in Senegal. It was hoped that those meetings, which would impose no financial burden on the Commission, would be co-sponsored by ECA. FAO would be willing to co-operate in implementing the provisions of the draft resolution concerning land reform in Africa (E/CN.14/L.208), provided that sufficient funds were available.

Mr. ASEM (Ghana) drew attention to the last sentence of the Comments on Section VI (v) of the Programme of Work (page 72 of document E/CN.14/267). His delegation hoped that the ECA studies would be carried out in consultation with FAO, which had already made studies on several of the subjects listed.

Efforts should be made to ensure that in their work on development planning and policies, the various economists, statisticians, agriculturalists and sociologists of the secretariat co-operated as a team. It might be desirable to establish a standing committee on agriculture to co-ordinate all those aspects of economic planning.

Mr. APPIAH (Ghana), referring to Section V of the Programme of Work, said that all countries attached importance to questions of training and education. In that connexion, his delegation wished to suggest that, whenever possible, vacancies on the ECA staff should be filled by Africans. The argument that Africans lacked experience should be discarded, and Africans given an opportunity to prove their worth.

The Programme of Work and Priorities for 1964-1965 (E/CN.14/267) was unanimously adopted.

DATE AND PLACE OF SEVENTH SESSION (agenda item 11)

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to consider item 11 of its agenda (date and place of the Seventh Session).

Mr. PARKER (Liberia), supported by Mr. MHEDHEBI (Tunisia), said that his delegation regarded as premature the Executive Secretary's recommendation to hold biennial sessions of the Commission. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the African Development Bank, the African common market and payments union, and the question of co-operation between the Commission and the Organization for African Unity were all matters that would require the Commission's attention in 1965. It was right and proper that in its early years at least the Commission should hold annual meetings. Delegations would recall that at the Fifth Session Kenya had invited the Commission to hold its seventh session in Nairobi. That invitation had been declined because Kenya was then still a colony. It was now independent, however, and the Liberian delegation wished to propose that the seventh session should be held in Nairobi in 1965.

The proposal was adopted.

Mr. OKELO-ODONGO (Kenya) thanked the Commission for its decision which would encourage his country in its future work.

Mr. MHEDHEBI (Tunisia) said his delegation wished to suggest that at its seventh session the Commission should consider amending its Rules of Procedure to provide that unless otherwise decided the Commission's sessions should be held at headquarters.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

A Meeting to arrange for a stable agreement on the standardization of freight rates (E/CN.14/L.193)

Mr. PARKER (Liberia) introduced the joint draft resolution by Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone (E/CN.14/L.193). The West African countries were concerned over the high and arbitrary freight rates charged by the West African Lines Conference. He cited a case where, two years earlier, the West African Lines Conference had increased shipping rates by 30 per cent as a result of delays caused by congestion at the Free Port of Monrovia but, when conditions had improved, had reduced them by only 15 per cent. The draft resolution called for a stable and guaranteed agreement on the standardization of freight rates, which affected the cost of living as well as trade and industry.

Mr. IBE (Nigeria) seconded the resolution. An agreement on the lines indicated was important for African development generally, and might help the African countries to avoid some of the difficulties encountered by the advanced countries at a similar stage in their development.

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) suggested that the Executive Secretary be asked to consult port authorities before approaching shipping owners and users.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.193) was adopted, subject to the action suggested by the representative of Ghana

Sub-regional offices (E/CN.14/L.195)

Mr. GABDOU (Chad) introduced a draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.195), proclaiming the existence of the sub-region of Central Africa and calling for a sub-regional office. Co-operative groupings already existed between some of the countries of the sub-region, and contact with those groups as well as with individual countries would help the Executive Secretary in his task of setting up the office. He suggested that the second operative clause be amended to include a reference to such groups.

It was so agreed.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.195) as amended, was adopted

International roads (E/CN.14/L.197)

Mr. PARKER (Liberia) introduced the draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.197) concerning an international road system.

Mr. KANE (Mauritania) and Mr. OKELLO-ODONGO (Kenya) asked that their countries be included as sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mr. SIDIKOU (Niger) suggested that the draft resolution be sponsored by all delegations.

It was so agreed.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.197) was adopted.

East and central african sub-regional office (E/CN.14/L.203)

Mr. OKELLO-ODONGO (Kenya) introduced the draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.203), confirming the setting up of an East and Central African sub-regional office at Lusaka (Northern Rhodesia). The decision was in line with the United Nations policy of decentralization, which enabled regional offices to work more closely with the States they serviced - an increasingly important factor as ECA moved from the stage of investigation to that of implementation.

Mr. LEPOLESA (Basutoland) seconded the resolution.

Mr. NSILO SWAI (Tanganyika), seconded by Mr. IBINGIRA (Uganda), proposed that the sub-regional office be called "East African sub-regional office" to avoid confusion with the Central African office.

It was so agreed.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY pointed out that the United Nations policy was to de-concentrate, not to de-centralize, activities.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.203) was adopted.

Conference of african planners (E/CN.14/L.204)

Mr. IBE (Nigeria) introduced the draft resolution on the establishment of a Conference of African Development Planners (E/CN.14/L.204).

Mr. MANKOUBI (Togo) recalled that the proposal was embodied in the Statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning approved in draft resolution E/CN.14/L.178. The proposed body would provide the best means of advising the Executive Secretary and of sharing the knowledge of the more experienced countries with the less experienced ones. Similar action had been taken in other regions.

Mr. MENSAH (Ghana) supported the draft resolution and remarked that some countries, including his own, had already been promoting co-operation between African planners.

Ato BERHANU WAKWAYA (Ethiopia) also supported the draft resolution.

Mr. NSILO SWAI (Tanganyika) asked to join the sponsors of the draft resolution.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.204) was adopted.

Situation of land reform in Africa (E/CN.14/L.208)

Mr. OKELO-ODONGO (Kenya) introducing the draft resolution on land reform (E/CN.14/L.208), pointed out that land reform was an essential part of economic and social development, for it involved improving land use, providing more land for cultivation - by irrigation for example - and the stepping up of agricultural production. Its importance was not lessened by the increasing emphasis on industry. The problem was a difficult one in Africa, with its many different systems of land ownership, and guidance and assistance from ECA and the specialized agencies would be invaluable.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that all delegations join in sponsoring the draft resolution.

It was so agreed.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.208) was adopted.

The development of telecommunications in Africa (E/CN.14/L.209)

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.209) be sponsored by all delegations.

It was so agreed.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.209) was adopted.

Mr. TEDROS (ITU), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that ITU would do everything in its power to assist the Executive Secretary and the African countries in implementing the resolution. Success would depend on co-operation between the African countries and on the willingness of industrialized countries to contribute material and skill to the joint programme.

The meeting was suspended at 11.22 a.m. and was resumed at 11.55 a.m.

Standard Customs Nomenclature (E/CN.14/L.213)

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that a standard customs nomenclature would be essential if draft resolution E/CN.14/L.198 on an African common market were to be implemented.

The draft resolution (E/CN.14/L.213) was adopted.

The meeting rose at noon.

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