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REPORT ON ACTIVITIES IN INDUSTRY

1. The Second Session of the Standing Committee on Industry, Natural Resources and Transport, held in Addis Ababa in December 1963, attached particular importance to the acceleration of the programme in all fields. There was unanimous agreement on the importance of industrial co-ordination and on proceeding rapidly towards its realization in practice. Great stress was also laid on the need for further detailed studies on a sub-regional basis.
2. The West African Conference on Industrial Co-ordination was held in Bamako from 5-15 October 1964. The conference was attended by all countries in the West African sub-region, with the exception of Sierra Leone, Gambia, and the Ivory Coast. In addition to large-scale modern industries, which necessarily require markets beyond the scope of individual countries, the agenda for the conference included medium-scale and small-scale industries, which are largely but not wholly, for national markets. The report of the conference gives details of the proceedings and decisions (Report of the Conference on Industrial Co-ordination in West Africa, E/CN.14/324, E/CN.14/INR/78). As a follow-up of the Bamako Conference, the secretariat is advising on pre-investment studies on a sub-regional and country basis, and is carrying out studies, in some countries of the sub-region, where further investigations have been requested. Further studies on the programming of industrial development in the sub-region are also being undertaken. A Regional Industrial Adviser for the sub-region will be appointed in 1965.

3. In North Africa, the main focus of activities is the sub-regional office in Tangier. An industrial co-ordination mission was sent towards the end of last year and the countries of the sub-region have agreed on a comprehensive follow-up action with a view to promoting negotiations on industrial co-ordination. Commissions have been established, and regular consultations among a number of the countries of the sub-region are taking place through the machinery provided by the sub-regional office. A meeting was held in November 1964 to discuss the creation of an industrial development centre for the sub-region. A study is being made on the possibility of establishing a documentation centre for the sub-region.

4. Preparations for an East African Industrial Co-ordination Conference are being made. The conference will be held during the first half of 1965, in Lusaka. The items for discussion include principles of industrial co-ordination and location, iron and steel, chemicals and fertilizers, textiles and allied industries, engineering industries, forest-based industries, food industries including meat processing and oilseed extraction and processing, non-ferrous metals, industries based on non-metallic minerals, leather goods and footwear, and other small-scale and medium-scale industries. It is hoped that, as for West Africa, the conference will be followed by pre-investment and investment studies.

5. As recommended by the Sixth Session of the Commission, an industrial co-ordination mission will be sent in 1965 to the countries in Central Equatorial Africa, including the Congo (Leopoldville). This will be followed by a meeting of government officials and experts to discuss the co-ordination of industrial development programmes in the sub-region.

6. A beginning was made during the year with the preparation of an industrial map of Africa. Data are being collected on industrial establishments under the following main headings: location, type, capacity, current output, capital structure, markets, raw materials.

On the basis of these data, a quarterly report will be prepared. Most member States have appointed rapporteurs to whom appropriate inquiry forms have been sent, and in several cases replies have been received.

7. Work has been proceeding on the preparation of an all-African conference on engineering. This was to have been held in February 1965, on the occasion of the Trade Fair in Accra, Ghana, but with the postponement of the Trade Fair until 1967, a later date in 1965 is now envisaged for the conference. In the meantime, following on the recommendation of the West African Industrial Co-ordination Conference, a detailed study is being undertaken of engineering industries in West Africa.

8. A team of experts from Poland, Holland and Sweden have been engaged to carry out a preliminary study on standardization in Africa, with the object of recommending what steps should be taken to arrive at uniform standards throughout the continent. The terms of reference for this study have been drawn up. It is hoped that investigations will begin before the end of 1964.

9. A preliminary paper on industrial finance was submitted to the Standing Committee on Industry, Natural Resources and Transport at its second session. A detailed study is now being carried out with a view to submitting a detailed analysis of the situation to the African Regional Industrial Symposium and the East African Industrial Co-ordination Conference. A study of the existing industrial, commercial, monetary and fiscal legislation will be completed by the end of 1964; the object of this study is to formulate proposals for the harmonization of investment laws to encourage industrial development on a country, sub-regional and regional basis. More intensive studies on a sub-regional basis will be carried out in 1965.

10. Research on investment criteria, economic and other pre-conditions of industrial development, with particular reference to specific obstacles to industrialization, is continuing.

11. In co-operation with the United Nations Industrial Development Centre, preparations are being made for a regional symposium on industrial development. Subjects for discussion will include sectorial studies, financing of industrial development, general industrial development problems, country profiles, industrial research and training, and practical problems in particular areas. The conference will be convened in November 1965 as one of a series of regional conferences in preparation for a world conference on industry in 1966.

12. A training course in industrial programming, organized jointly by the United Nations Industrial Development Centre, the Institute for Economic Development in Dakar, and the Institute of National Planning of the United Arab Republic, will be held in Cairo in February - May 1965. The course will be attended by trainees from all African countries who are member and associate member States of the Commission.

13. A Seminar on Industrial Estates was held in December 1964. This was organized jointly by the secretariat and the United Nations Industrial Development Centre. Preparatory work for the establishment of model industrial estates with training facilities in East and Central Africa and West Africa has been initiated.

14. A joint ECA-FAO regional pulp and paper conference will be held in Cairo in March 1965. The scope and organization of the conference, and the provisional agenda have already been prepared. The conference will review past developments, future demand estimates and appraise African fibrous raw material supply. The recommendations of the conference will form the basis of ECA's work programme on pulp and paper industries.

15. As a follow-up of the industrial co-ordination missions which were sent to West, East and Central and North Africa in 1963, further missions are being considered. The main purpose of these missions will be to lay down the basic principles and objectives of a rational industrial development programme on a sub-regional and regional basis.