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Public Administration, Management and
Manpower Division

REPORT OF ADVISORY SERVICE MISSION TO KENYA

ON

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAMMES AND OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER TECHNICAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH

NIAROBI (KENYA) 16-23 JUNE 1988

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1. INTRODUCTION

On the directive of the Executive Secretary of ECA a mission was undertaken to Kenya between 16-23 June 1988. The three man mission comprised:

- Ally H. Golo - Deputy Chief, Administration & Conference Services Division:
- Peter M. Efange - Regional Adviser, PAMMD
- Paul N. Nyangabyaki - Budget Officer, ECA

The object of the mission was to attend the meetings of the Executive Committee (15-16 June) and the Governing Council (21-22 June) of the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research. Mr. Efange attended both meetings whilst Messrs Golo and Nyangabyaki attending the meeting of the Governing Council.

The official proceedings of both meetings will be distributed to participants including ECA in due course and this report merely highlights the major issues discussed and the background to some of the decisions.

2. Attendance

Both meetings were presided over by the newly appointed Kenyan Minister of Technical Training and Applied Technology, Professor S.K. Ongeri. Seven member States participated i.e. Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, Lesotho, Uganda, Zaire and Zambia. Togo, Sudan, Ethiopia and Rwanda who are not yet members attended as observers. Attendance at the Governing Council included Ministers from Uganda and Zambia.

3. Discussion of Substantive Issues

(i) **Membership:** It was noted that there had been no change in the membership of the Institute since the previous year and that no new States had signed the constitution. This issue was viewed with great concern and the Council urged that positive and concerted efforts be made to improve the situation. There was an urgent need to sell the institute to member States through the printing and distribution of brochures as well as through personal visits. The need to win political support among member States was also emphasized. The Council therefore decided to solicit the high offices of the Executive Secretary of the ECA as well as the Secretary-General of the OAU to participate in a high level mission with the Chairman, Honourable S.K. Ongeri, to seek the support of African Heads of State for increased membership and to urge defaulting governments to pay their contributions. It was however observed that such a task might prove difficult

as the institute had, inspite of its lofty objectives, very little to show in terms of achievements. In addition its history of poor management and constant squabbling among its senior executives had given it a rather poor and tarnished image in some African countries.

(ii) **Contributions:** The payment of assessed contributions continued to lag behind and showed little sign of improvement. The current economic crisis in Africa as well as the critical foreign exchange situation were no doubt, partly responsible for this dismal situation. In 1987 only Kenya and Nigeria made any payments to the Institute even though the Council had taken an earlier decision to write off 50% of outstanding arrears. Significantly, Egypt, the member State of the Director General had made no payments since 1985. So far no member State had paid its 1988 dues and the outstanding balance of unpaid contributions currently stood at the staggering figure of US$3,010,927. The Institute's "Disposable Funds" as at 31 May 1988 were a meagre US$513.352.

(iii) **Development Budget 1988/89:** The Director General presented a capital budget of US$11,478,563 for the year 1988/89. This sum was to be utilized for the construction of Phase I of the new buildings of the Institute. Earlier an Implementation Committee appointed by the Council had recommended the appointment of Archplan Associates of Kenya as the Institute's Architectural Consultants. The architects had now presented a master-plan (a copy of which is attached to this report). The figure for the construction of the buildings includes an amount of $46,472 to defray the cost of fund raising missions to member States, Europe and North America.

It was noted that the amount of $11,478,563 for the construction of the buildings was to be derived from assessed contributions from member States. In view of the fact that member States had shown little interest in paying their normal contributions to meet the recurrent costs of the institute, it seemed not only unrealistic but extremely unlikely that they would be willing to shoulder this additional burden. The Director General had also indicated that Phase I of the building project would be completed within eighteen months from January 1989 when the project would be put to tender. In the prevailing circumstances this appeared somewhat over optimistic.

It was stated that negotiations with the EEC to secure funding for the buildings had stalled and the prospects of raising funds from that or other external sources appeared to be very slim. The whole affair therefore appeared to be a non-starter.

(iv) **Regular Programme Budget 1988/89:** The Council approved the regular programme budget for the Institute totalling US$356,093 for the fiscal year 1988/89. Since no contributions had been received from member States for the current year it meant that the institute would depend on its meagre reserves of US$513,352 to meet this expenditure. At this rate, the institute would be singing its swan song before long.

The Director General proposed that four additional staff members (2 at L6 and 2 at L4) be recruited for the new Electro-mechanical Engineering Centre and the Agricultural Engineering and Food Technology Centre. The possibility of filling these posts by Officers seconded by member States and off-setting the costs from their assessed contributions was endorsed by the Council.

The Council took note of the fact that the Institute had set no targets for the implementation of its 1988/89 work programme; there was no clear programme for systematic implementation and neither were there any clearly defined outputs for existing and the proposed new staff of the Centre. The management was advised that in future it should endeavour to budget and programme over a two year cycle instead of one as at present.

(v) **Workshops:** Four workshops were proposed for 1988/89 viz,

(a) Management of Human Resources for Industrial Development;

(b) Industrial Energy management and conservation;

(c) Industrial Maintenance Technology;

(d) Modern Methods in Food Processing.

The estimated total costs of these workshops was given as US$31,168. So far there was little prospect of any of the workshops taking place because the institute had not been able to mobilize the necessary financial resources and member States had not indicated any interest in hosting them.

(vi) **Relationship of ECA-sponsored Industrial Group of Institutes with ECA**

The Director General proposed that all ECA-sponsored industrial group of institutions, namely the AIHTTR, ARCEDEM, ARSO and ARCT should be brought under the umbrella of one division in ECA to facilitate effective collaborative

activities. It was noted that such a proposal was never previously discussed with ECA. ECA representatives pointed out that in practice the implementation will be difficult since the various ECA divisions with responsibility for these institutions each operated a programme budget and had designated a project officer for each institution under its purview. It would be difficult to redeploy the project officers into one division to handle all four institutions. The Council however requested that ECA should explore ways and means of regrouping these institutions with a view to harmonizing their activities.

(vii) **Audit Report:** The Council noted the report of the auditor which was considered to be an interim audit pending the Institute's completion of the preparation of the accounts and financial statements covering the period 1st January 1987 to 31st May 1988. Also it was decided that upon completion of the preparation of accounts and financial statements, a complete audit should be undertaken and a final audit report prepared for submission to the Extra-ordinary Governing Council Meeting to be held in April 1989.

(viii) **Staff Matters:** The Council held a meeting in camera to decide on the renewal or otherwise of the contracts of the Director General and the Director of Administration and Finance. The Chairman stated that he was fully aware of the problems of the Institute and the constant friction between the two senior staff members; he was also aware of previous Council decisions to down-grade the post of Director of Administration and Finance and re-advertise it on the expiration of the contract of the present incumbent. However having seen both of them work together since his assumption of office two months ago he pleaded with members that he should be given a chance to put things together and sort our the problems. Dispensing with the services of both of them at the expiration of their contracts would create a vacuum and this would not be in the interests of the Institute. He assured the Council that he would be monitoring the situation on a regular basis.

After further deliberation the Council decided:

(a) To recinde its earlier decision relating to the appointment of the Director of Finance and Administration.

(b) To offer each of the officers a new two year fixed term contract on the expiration of their current contracts.

(c) To convey the decision of the Council to the two staff members in writing.

4. Conclusion

The African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research has had a sad and chequered history since its inception. Its problems which are well-known include low membership, limited payment of assessed contributions and lack of staff. Above all it has never had the right leadership to lift it from its current situation and imbue it with a new sense of direction. The leadership has lacked vision and is constantly obssessed with issues other than the long term goals and objectives of the Institute. It seems very unlikely that much would be achieved in the next two years without attitudinal changes should the staff members agree to accept the new two year fixed term contracts. Indeed, the Director General made it clear at the close of the meeting that he was dissatisfied with the decision relating to the renewal of his contract for a period of two years only instead of four. One is not sure whether he would give of his best should he decide to stay on.