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A0439

Distr.
LIMITED
UNACAST/AF.REG/X.3
8 May, 1975
Original: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

African Regional Group of UNACAST
Tenth Consultative Meeting
Addis Ababa, 16-18 June 1975.

REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF ECA IN
THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SINCE THE NINTH
CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF THE AFRICAN
REGIONAL GROUP

African Regional Plan for the Application
of Science and Technology to
Development

The promotion of the African Regional Plan for the application of Science and Technology continued to be a major preoccupation in the science and technology programme of the secretariat.

Mobilization of resources

Two project proposals, one relating to the promotion of the African Regional Plan and the other to the transfer of technology to and among African countries, were submitted to UNDP during December 1974 with a view to securing financial support for them. Preliminary remarks from UNDP indicated that the project "Promotion of the African Regional Plan for the Application of Science and Technology to Development" met with their approval in principle although no financial commitment on it was given. The secretariat undertook further consultations with the UNDP Regional Representative in Addis Ababa and UNESCO regarding this project and it is hoped that the clarifications offered by ECA will lead to the approval of the project by UNDP.

Regional Projects

With regard to the regional projects which were proposed at the ninth meeting of the African Regional Group, the secretariat has undertaken follow-up action, which is reported on in detail in document UNACAST/AF. REG/X.2.

AF Reg. 1.3

Establishment of national machineries
for the implementation of the African
Regional Plan.

In keeping with the spirit of Commission resolution 248(XI), the Science and Technology Section of ECA has endeavoured to render assistance to a number of countries in the establishment of national machineries for the implementation of the African Regional Plan. During the period under review it was possible to arrange only one mission which covered the following countries: The Sudan, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Uganda. The Science and Technology Section has not been allowed the necessary financial support for carrying out more missions to offer assistance in connexion with the establishment and operation of national machineries for the African Regional Plan and to undertake an on-the-spot appraisal of the implementation of the African Regional Plan in individual African countries.

It should be noted that the secretariat's promotional activities were meant to be a prelude to important activities to be initiated by the countries themselves. Although many countries have received the message of the World Plan of Action, the secretariat believes that there are some where intensive promotional work needs to be carried out. The Third Conference of Ministers passed a resolution 268(XII) which further reinforces resolution 248(XI), and the African Regional Group will be requested to make comment on this new resolution in view of the difficulties referred to above.

It should also be noted that the suggestions made earlier by the African Regional Group concerning the holding of regional and country seminars for promoting the African Regional Plan have not been carried out owing to lack of funds.

Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for
Science and Technology Development in Africa

The Science and Technology Section made the arrangements and provided the documentation for the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, which was held at ECA from 17-19 July 1974. Two main items dealt with by the meeting were an appraisal of the implementation of the African Regional Plan in individual african countries and a review of the ECA science and technology work programme for 1974-1975. A summary of the Committee's deliberations appears in document E/CN.14/624. The African Regional Group is invited to take particular note of paragraphs 36-83 of that report and of a resolution adopted by the same meeting which appears on page 17 of the report.

Promotion of regional co-operation in
Science and Technology

A representative of the secretariat participated in a joint ECA/OAU meeting on 26 August 1974 which considered the setting up of a joint secretariat team to assist African States members of the Committee on Science and Technology Development in accordance with Commission resolution 248(XI).

The Science and Technology Section of the secretariat published a survey of professional engineering associations in the African region and distributed it among the associations which contributed material for its preparation.

ECA participated in the third consultative inter-secretariat meeting between UNESCO, ECA, and OAU, which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 3 to 5 March 1975. The main purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity to representatives of the three organizations to exchange information on current and planned follow-up activities in connexion with the CASTAFRICA recommendations. Discussions also included consideration of joint action in respect of a number of priority projects in the field of science and technology.

Other activities

A representative of ECA participated in a seminar on recycling and disposal of solid waste, which was held in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, from 7 to 11 April 1975. The seminar was sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme.