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NRD/CRSU/89/3

Mission Report on Data Collection

19 - 22 April 1989

Nairobi (Kenya)

By

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31 May 1989

Background

The mission was undertaken to collect data necessary to expedite early publication of the Cartographic Inventory for Africa atlas. Earlier, bids for the printing of the atlas were invited, but those received from Nairobi (the only ones from Africa) revealed lack of clarity of instructions given to prospective tenderers. The mission was also required to brief tenderers for them to appreciate the type of work and the quality expected. The terms of reference also included discussions with technical staff at the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing, the details concerning fair costing of such a job so as to assist the ECA publications committee in making its recommendations for external printing of the atlas. The mission was an activity towards the implementation of programme element 3.3 concerning the publication of the inventory atlas.

The mission

The author of this report travelled to Nairobi on 19 April and made appointments for 20 and 21 April 1989 as he was to return to his duty station on 22 April 1989. The appointments for Thursday 20 April 1989 were arranged with Survey of Kenya at 10:00 a.m.; Prudential Printers Ltd at 11:00 a.m.; Majestic Printing Works Ltd., at 03:00 p.m.

With regard to the programme for Friday, 20 April 1989, the morning period was spent at the Centre. In the afternoon there was the visit to other printers and to collect any information or proforma invoices that were promised the previous day.

Discussions held with Majestic and Prudential included briefing them in detail what was actually required as a final product. The one-member of the mission was accompanied by a Cartographer from the Centre. Examples of reproduction materials were carried to Nairobi; they included 3 original detail plate drawings, 3 contact film negatives of the same drawings, 3 photocopies of information sheets, and a sample of the final reproduction material.

Having listened to the briefing and seen the actual cartographic artwork, then discussed various reproduction methods, there emerged a better understanding of ECA requirements. As technical production processes are not so much varied for this particular work, representatives of both companies tried to ask ECA to consider accepting reproduction on clear film contacts as a way of reducing labour costs. As the suggestion would required ECA to depart from the original objective in the design of the drawings and presentation of the inventory index sheets of the atlas, the mission explained its objection and reassured them of its confidence in their capabilities. The element was found necessary because it was observed that the printers were not too enthusiastic about the job as the reproduction process was time consuming. In the end they appreciated the importance of participating in bidding for the job. Each one asked for at least two weeks to work out costs and submit revised proforma invoices indicating fresh validity dates.

Concerning the visit to the production section of the Survey of Kenya, arrangements had been made to go round their facilities but as it turned out the, member of the mission needed to be cleared from very high authority and this would take time. Nevertheless, the Director of Surveys was able to receive the mission and discussed Kenyan participation and expected to contribute to the forthcoming seventh United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa.

On the morning of Friday 21 April 1989, the mission visited different departments of RCSSMRS. It saw the equipment and facilities of the Centre. However, talking with individual staff gives the impression that the poison left in the body after recent events involving leadership of the Centre, needs drawing out. Although this aspect is not in the terms of reference, it is worth the while to mention that there remains problems which require looking into preferably by someone from ECA Personnel and or Budget Section as they relate more to staff management matters.

As there was no specific request for recommendations from the mission, it is only expected that Managers of both Majestic and Prudential will keep word and submit their tenders at an early date.

List of those met

Mr. S.L. Okec, Acting Director-General, Regional Centre for Services
in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS)

Prof. S. Ndyetabula: RCSSMRS

Mr. R.K. Muteto RCSSMRS

Mr. G. Adika RCSSMRS

Mr. M. Kibirige RCSSMRS

Mr. J.T. Masembe RCSSMRS

Mr. Sushil Bhat, Manager, Majestic Printing

Mr. P.B. Patel, Prudential Printers Ltd.

Mr. O. Absaloms, Director, Survey of Kenya