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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Thirteenth Conference of Chief Executives
of ECA-sponsored Regional and
Subregional Institutions

13-14 April 1993
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

REPORT OF THE MEETING

A. Venue and Attendance

1. The Thirteenth Conference of Chief Executives of ECA-sponsored regional and subregional institutions took place in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire from 13 to 14 April 1993 at the African Development Bank. The meeting was chaired by a representative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.
2. The Heads and Representatives of the following institutions participated: African Development Bank (ADB); African Regional Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS); African Regional Centre for Technology (ARCT); African Regional Industrial Property Organization (ARIPO); African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO); Institut de Développement Economique et de Planification (IDEP); Institut de Formation et de Recherche Demographiques (IFORD); Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS); Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys (RECTAS); and West African Clearing House (WACH). The Interafrican Coffee Organization participated as observer.
3. The African Development Bank provided the hosting facilities for the Conference.

B. Agenda and Programme of Work

4. The Conference adopted the following agenda and programme of work:

Tuesday, 13 April 1993

- i) Adoption of the agenda and programme of work;
- ii) Matters arising from the Report of the Twelfth Conference;
- iii) Consideration of main agenda:
 - (a) Report on rationalization and harmonization of ECA-sponsored institutions.
 - (b) Progress reports by ECA-sponsored institutions on the status of their project proposals for EC funding within the framework of the Lomé IV Convention.
 - (c) Progress reports on preparations for the UNDP Fifth Cycle Programme.

iv) Any other business:

(a) Report on Fifth meeting of the Standing Committee on the harmonization and standardization of documentation and information systems at regional and subregional institutions in Africa.

(b) Date and venue of next meeting.

Wednesday, 14 April 1993:

i) Meeting between ADB and Ad-hoc Committee on cooperation between ECA-sponsored institutions and ADB.

ii) Consideration and adoption of report of meeting.

iii) Closing of the Thirteenth Conference.

C. Account of Proceedings

Opening of the Conference :

5. The Representative of UNECA, who chaired the meeting, conveyed the regret of the UNECA Executive Secretary for not being able to participate personally at this Conference owing to some emergent engagements. He read a key-note address on behalf of the Executive Secretary which called upon the ADB to support the activities of the ECA-sponsored institutions. He emphasized that the time had come to adopt and implement rationalization and harmonization measures as a necessary panacea to address the financial and associated problems which have confronted the institutions for some time now, and to promote concerted actions to tackle the development problems of member States. In this context, he urged the Chief Executives to devise supportive strategies to help the institutions become genuine success stories and centres of excellence in their areas of competence.

6. A Representative of ADB also delivered an opening statement which recalled the general poor state of the economies of the Africa region marked by poverty, malnutrition and deprivation, and the challenge that this posed to regional and subregional institutions in Africa. He expressed ADB's readiness to continue to work closely with ECA-sponsored institutions in the interest of Africa's development.

D. Matters arising from Report of the Twelfth Conference:

7. The meeting reviewed the report of the Twelfth Conference by examining the extent to which its recommendations were implemented.
 - (a) Harmonization of activities
8. The establishment of a consortium by each specialized group has still not been implemented.
 - (b) Financial Sustainability of ECA-sponsored institutions
 - i) Collaboration with sister organizations
9. By the accounts of Representatives of a number of the participating institutions including ARCT, ARSO, IDEP, IFORD, RCSSMRS, RECTAS and WACH, much progress was made in the implementation of this recommendation.
10. It appeared that these institutions are promoting cooperation with other sister organizations on programmes of common interest while establishing relationships with donor agencies including EC, to facilitate the funding of programmes.
 - ii) Submission by the institutions to UNECA of Comprehensive profiles on their areas of competence and consultancy capabilities for transmission to potential sources of funding
11. This information is yet to be provided to UNECA. The Representative of UNECA stressed the importance of this exercise as a means of marketing the expertise and capabilities available at the various institutions.
12. The Representative of IFORD drew the attention of the meeting to the availability of forms designed by ADB to solicit information on consultancy capabilities of institutions, which he recommended institutions to take advantage of.
13. The Representative of ARSO reminded the meeting that it was the responsibility of the Ad-hoc Committee to ensure the compilation of the information on the institutions' areas of competence and consultancy capabilities. Therefore, he urged the newly constituted Ad-hoc Committee to expedite this task.

iii) ECA should encourage the use of the institutions to undertake consultancy and subcontract assignments within the framework of extra-budgetary funded projects

14. A representative of UNECA indicated that UNECA's action in this regard had been quite limited, as only a few institutions have had the benefit of being awarded subcontracts within the framework of its technical assistance projects. He stressed that nevertheless, efforts will be made to expand this arrangement by, for instance, submitting all relevant UNECA project documents to the institutions.
15. In this context, the Representative of IDEP remarked that a greater insight by the Chief Executives into the internal mechanisms of UNECA as well as the fostering of close inter-personal relationship with its substantive Divisions could open up vistas of opportunity.

iv) Ad-hoc Committee

16. Considering that the Ad-hoc Committee previously established by the Eleventh Conference to promote cooperation between ECA-sponsored institutions and ADB had proved to be ineffective, the meeting decided to reconstitute it. Following consultations among the members of each specialized group present, the meeting agreed on the following new composition of the Ad-hoc Committee and designated UNECA to be the convener of its meetings.
- a) The West African Clearing House(Financial and Banking Services Group)
 - b) Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys(Earth Resources Services Group)
 - c) African Regional Organization for Standardization (Industrial Development Services Group)
 - d) Institut de Développement Economique et de Planification(Socio-Economic Development and Management Services Group)
 - e) Federation of African Chambers of Commerce (Trade and Transportation Services Group)

E. Consideration of main agenda items

a) Report on Rationalization and Harmonization of ECA-sponsored institutions

17. After presentation of the report by a representative of UNECA, the Conference noted and agreed that primarily, the proposed measures on rationalization and harmonization of ECA-sponsored institutions aim, inter-alia, at strengthening programmes and establishing effective linkages among such programmes. The Conference also made the following observations with a view to enriching the report.

- i) The lack of commitment by member States in terms of honouring their financial obligations and devoting adequate resources to the priority areas covered by the institutions, should be stressed. In this connection, the Representative of ARCT emphasized the complete marginalization that member States had accorded to their science and technology development.
- ii) It would not be advisable to propose new names for certain institutions in view of the goodwill and trademark already established by the existing name. In this context, IDEP should maintain its name in spite of the proposed merger with ACARTSOD.
- iii) The report should avoid open-ended options, in particular the three alternatives proposed with respect to ACMS. In this regard, only the option to merge ACMS along with IDEP and ACARTSOD should remain.
- iv) To avoid it being confused with the recommendations of the present report, it will be useful to delete Annex IV on the summary of recommendations of the previous Ad-hoc Committee.
- v) The recommendations relating to RIPS and IFORD in the main body of the report should also be reflected in the summary of recommendations in Section II. There should also be safeguards to ensure that the two institutions do not lose their regional orientation after being integrated into the national universities of their respective host countries.
- vi) As a deliberate policy, host countries should be encouraged to assume obligations in addition to the payment of their normal subscriptions.
- vii) The report should include a time-table for implementing the recommendations on rationalization, including the signing of relevant protocols.

- viii) An appropriate resolution should be prepared based on the recommendations of the report for consideration and adoption by the ECA Conference of Ministers. The resolution should foresee the organization of joint meetings of the present Governing Councils or Boards to implement the decisions of the ECA Council of Ministers.
- ix) The possibility of issuing a special travel document or Laissez-Passer to the personnel of ECA-sponsored institutions similar to the one provided to OAU staff, is recommended.
- b) Progress reports by ECA-sponsored institutions on the status of their project proposals for EC funding within the framework of Lomé IV Convention
- 18. A representative of UNECA recalled that UNECA had provided the institutions with information on EC guidelines to gain access to EC resources. Among the important conditions of assistance is that the institution should demonstrate that it enjoys the support of at least 75% of its member States in terms of payment of financial contributions.
- 19. The meeting noted that given the grim reality of lack of financial support by a large majority of member States, such a condition would be difficult, if not impossible, to fulfil by a number of institutions. The need for EC to exercise some flexibility in this area was strongly felt.
- 20. The Representative of UNECA informed the meeting about efforts being deployed at the level of UNECA to promote the positive consideration and funding by EC of project proposals from ECA-sponsored institutions. Meanwhile, the institutions could begin working on proposals that could eventually be called upon by UNECA in the context of these efforts. The meeting noted that some institutions such as ARCT, ARIPO and IFORD, had already submitted proposals for EC funding but encountered difficulties including the satisfaction of the foregoing condition regarding support by member States.
- c) Progress reports on preparations for UNDP Fifth Cycle Programme
- 21. A representative of UNECA informed the meeting about preparations for the Fifth Cycle at the level of the UNECA secretariat. In line with the programming approach emphasized by UNDP with respect to the Fifth Cycle, UNECA has prepared a programme on economic cooperation and integration with components including the rationalization and harmonization of ECA-sponsored institutions and support to the UNTACDA and IDDA decade activities.

22. The latter includes proposals for strengthening ARCT, ARCEDEM and ARSO as supporting centers for the attainment of the goals of the industrial development decade.
23. The economic cooperation and integration programme also makes mention of assistance to IDEP, subject to the elaboration of a full-fledged proposal by IDEP in this regard.
24. However, the problem of lack of resources by UNDP posed a genuine constraint to the financing of all the components of the programme drawn up by UNECA.
25. Nevertheless, other UNDP funding facilities such as the Capital Development Fund and the TCDC financing are possibilities that ECA-sponsored institutions could explore respectively for their infrastructural development programmes and TCDC-related activities.
26. With respect to the regional organizations embracing the North African countries, the Regional Bureau of Arab States (RBAS) constituted another source of support for activities specially tailored to cover these countries within the catchment area of the Bureau.
27. The African Capacity Building Foundation represented another facility that could be targeted through the elaboration of relevant capacity building projects.
28. The observations that ensued the presentation of this agenda item reflected the following main points:
 - i) Experience has shown that UNDP's sustained support to the activities of the ECA-sponsored institutions served as a necessary catalyst for securing other bilateral and multilateral co-financing assistance.
 - ii) UNECA as executing agency should assist in conducting periodic project evaluations.
 - iii) RCSSMRS should contact UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa in New York requesting the pending evaluation of the Fourth Cycle project to be expedited. A copy of this communication should be sent to UNECA for follow-up.

4. Any other business

a) Report on the Fifth meeting of the Standing Committee on the Harmonization and Standardization of documentation and information systems at regional and subregional institutions in Africa.

29. It was suggested that PADIS should explore the possibility of mobilizing resources to support the participation of institutions to the Standing Committee meetings.
30. The celebration of African Information Day was accepted. However, some participants felt that having 19th and 20th November consecutively as Development Information and Industrial Development Days respectively was not a convenient timing, although the Committee noted that the day of 19th was already a fait-accompli. It was, however, stressed that all the relevant materials for the celebration of the Day should be sent by PADIS to all the institutions.
31. All the other recommendations of the Standing Committee were acceptable to the Chief Executives.
32. The meeting was briefed by ADB officials on procurement and technical assistance procedures of the ADB Group.
33. Finally, the ECA-sponsored institutions were reminded to forward their exhibits as soon as possible to the UNECA secretariat, in connection with the planned exhibition on ECA-sponsored institutions to be held during the forthcoming ECA Conference of Ministers from 3 to 6 May 1993.

b) Date and venue of next meeting

34. In the light of the recommendation made by the UNECA report on rationalization of ECA-sponsored institutions to organize the Conference of Chief Executives every two years instead of annually, the meeting agreed to hold the next Conference in Addis Ababa during the first quarter of 1995.

Meeting of the Ad-hoc Committee on Cooperation
between ECA-sponsored institutions and ADB

The reconstituted Ad-hoc Committee agreed to devote its first meeting to the establishment of a programme of work related to item 2 of its terms of reference which is to prepare a paper on the objectives and work programmes of the ECA-sponsored institutions for ADB's consideration. The paper will also spell out the capabilities and capacities of these institutions for consultancy and other services.

To this end, the following programme and time-table were established:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
1. Development of guidelines to assist the institutions prepare their comprehensive profiles including their capabilities and capacities	Early May 1993	UNECA
2. Review of guidelines by members of the Ad-hoc Committee	Early May 1993	UNECA/Ad-hoc Committee
3. Submission of guidelines to all ECA-sponsored institutions	Early June 1993	UNECA
4. Submission of completed profiles by institutions to UNECA	End July 1993	ECA-sponsored institutions
5. Completion of synthesis of completed profiles and submission to members of Ad-hoc Committee	End Aug. 1993	UNECA
6. Meeting of Ad-hoc Committee in UNECA to review and finalize synthesized profiles and discuss modalities of their submission to donors and other partners	Early Oct. 1993	UNECA
7. Printing of completed profiles	Early Nov. 1993	UNECA
8. Submission of printed profiles to donors/partners	To be determined	To be determined

The Ad-hoc Committee also agreed on the following:

- a) ADB should send to UNECA information on its funding facilities; and
- b) A comprehensive list of key officials in ADB with whom the Ad-hoc Committee will be dealing.

This information will in turn be conveyed by UNECA to the members of the Ad-hoc Committee.

- c) In relation to the terms of reference of the Ad-hoc Committee adopted at the Eleventh Conference of Chief Executives held in Addis Ababa from 23 to 24 April 1991, the Ad-hoc Committee requested UNECA to consider the funding of its meeting in Addis Ababa in early October 1993 to review and finalize the profiles on ECA-sponsored institutions.
- d) In the same context, the Ad-hoc Committee requested ADB to finance its meeting in Abidjan to consider items 1 and 3 of its terms of reference.

Revised Terms of Reference and Composition of
Ad-hoc Committee on Cooperation between
ECA-sponsored institutions and ADB

1. To examine with ADB ways and means of enhancing cooperation between ADB and ECA-sponsored institutions with a view to enabling ADB to play an important role in institutional capacity building.
2. To prepare a paper on the objectives and work programmes of the ECA-sponsored institutions for ADB's consideration.

This paper will also spell out the capabilities and capacities of these institutions for consultancy and other services.

3. To explore with ADB the modalities and framework of utilizing the services of ECA-sponsored institutions.
4. To submit reports on its activities to the Conference of Chief Executives of ECA-sponsored institutions.

To carry out the above tasks UNECA is called upon to coordinate the activities of the Committee with ADB and provide secretarial support services. In this connection, the Committee is expected to convene at UNECA headquarters to finalize (2) above and at ADB headquarters to carry out tasks (1) and (3) above. The six-member Committee will be composed of:

- (i) Chief Executive of WACH, representing Financial and Banking Services Group.
- (ii) Chief Executive of RECTAS, representing Earth Resources Services Group.
- (iii) Chief Executive of ARSO, representing Industrial Development Services Group.
- (iv) Chief Executive of IDEP, representing Socio-economic Development and Management Services Group,
- (v) Chief Executive of FACC, representing Trade and Transport Services Group, and
- (vi) UNECA Representative(Convener)

UNECA is called upon to make funds available for the meeting to be held at its headquarters, and ADB is similarly requested to fund the meeting to be held in Abidjan.

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