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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Second Meeting of the Trans-African
Highway Co-ordinating Committee

Bangui, 10-14 April 1972

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
ON THE STATE OF ADVANCEMENT OF THE PROJECT

M72-487

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I. Introduction

1. Following its first meeting, which was held from 14 to 18 June 1971 at Addis Ababa, the Trans-African Highway Co-ordinating Committee presented, in a document annexed to its final report E/CN.14/527 and E/CN.14/TRANS/46 a programme of work showing its institutional organization, together with a number of concrete measures to be taken for the implementation of the project. The present document shows what has been accomplished since that meeting and submits for the consideration of the Committee the prospects with regard to the future phases of the project.

2. It should first of all be noted that this meeting in Bangui takes place only twenty days later than was originally planned; this is not an excessive delay when one considers the extent of the task and the difficulties involved.

II. The Highway Bureau and its activities

3. In accordance with the Executive Secretary's undertaking of last June, a special bureau was set up in Addis Ababa on 1 July 1971 to act as secretariat to the Committee. Two engineers from ECA were immediately seconded to the Bureau on a full-time basis, and an Adviser was made responsible for the orientation and supervision of the project. This bureau has been operating within the Transport Section, and all the facilities of the secretariat have been placed at its disposal. During the nine months since its creation, it has concentrated on promoting a series of measures which have culminated in the completion of a pre-feasibility study of the whole trans-African route from Lagos to Mombasa.

4. The Bureau's basic mission was to commission a pre-feasibility study of the alternative routes for the highway taking into account the wishes of the governments, in order to "prepare a paper showing the conditions of the routes and identifying sections which require reconstruction or up-grading to enable the Bureau to make recommendations to the Co-ordinating Committee for the optimum alignment". This represents the first phase in the implementation of the project; the subsequent phases consist of conducting the feasibility studies to establish the economic justification for the project, before embarking on the physical construction of the highway, which will have to be undertaken in the form of five-year programmes to be submitted to the governments concerned. It was also understood that as the physical construction and improvement of the highway advances sufficiently, measures for the regulation of passenger and goods traffic will be considered for the purpose of achieving some degree of harmonization, if not uniformity, over the trans-African route as a whole.

5. From 29 September to 1 October 1971, the Bureau organized a meeting to determine the assistance of the industrialized countries in the implementation of the project.

6. As shown in the report of this meeting (document E/CN.14/537 and E/CN.14/TRANS/52), most of the industrialized countries which participated made offers of assistance which in total exceeded the requirements set out in the preliminary feasibility studies. As a result of these offers, for which thanks are due to the Governments of the United Kingdom, Belgium, the United States of America, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan and Sweden, it was possible to carry out the pre-feasibility study today submitted for consideration by the Co-ordinating Committee. Special thanks are due to the Government of the United Kingdom, which financed this study under its technical assistance programme and thus enabled ECA to honour its initial commitments in the Trans-African Highway project.

7. TP O'Sullivan and Partners, a London firm of consulting engineers, were commissioned, and on the basis of the terms of reference negotiated with the Highway Bureau, they conducted the pre-feasibility study of the entire Lagos-Mombasa route between November 1971 and February 1972. Their conclusions were presented on 1 March in a document which was distributed to the member Governments of the Co-ordinating Committee, to other Central and East African governments who demonstrated an interest in the project, to institutions which are associate members of the Committee and in general to all those who had participated in the meeting of June 1971.

III. The O'Sullivan report

8. TP O'Sullivan and Partners adhered fully to the terms of reference of their mission, and the final report which they presented reflects the ideas of the bureau with regard to the definition of the Trans-African Highway and to the methodology used in the comparative study of the alternative routes. In any event, on the basis of the recommendations contained in this report, the Bureau proposes the adoption of the itinerary which passes through the localities indicated in annex I attached to the present report as the route for the Lagos-Mombasa Trans-African Highway.

9. The technical and economic arguments in favour of this route which have been developed in the O'Sullivan report are submitted for the consideration of the members of the Co-ordinating Committee. Following the present meeting, it is hoped to obtain the final agreement of the six African governments concerned, with regard to the Highway, so that the Bureau can take the necessary steps to implement the subsequent phases of the project.

10. The adoption of the conclusions of the O'Sullivan report does not necessarily imply acceptance of the accuracy of the detailed estimates of cost, or profitability on which the recommendations are based. As the consultant himself, acknowledges the calculations were made on the basis of data which were sometimes very imprecise, thus necessitating, extrapolations in the absence of certain items of information and all this had to be undertaken in a relatively short period of time. The most important factor is not so much the accuracy of the absolute values of the figures contained in the report, but rather the relative values of the various parameters which are compared. In other words, if, for example, the estimates of the costs of repaying the capital invested in the project over the various highway sections are all subject to approximately the same margin of error, the basis for the final choice between two competing alternative routes is not necessarily affected.

11. The problem which the consultant had to face consisted not of assessing the advisability of constructing a road link between Lagos and Mombasa on the basis of technical and economic considerations, still less of proposing other solutions as alternatives to the highway, but rather of indicating the best route for such a link to follow, taking into account the existing infrastructure, the prospects for increased traffic resulting from a growth in intra-African trade, and of course of the national considerations as expressed by the governments which must be reconciled with the requirements of sub-regional co-operation. In any event, any comments and observations on the prefeasibility study report should be directed towards establishing whether the alternates selected from a number of possibilities in various countries to be incorporated into the Trans-African Highway do in effect justify the priority accorded to them and warrant multinational support.

IV. Future phases of the project

12. After the prefeasibility study, the other phases of the project includes:

- (a) feasibility and engineering studies;
- (b) implementation and supervision of the construction of the highway.

13. Parallel with these two phases, a study of the regulation of the flow of traffic and of the movement of goods and passengers can be undertaken at any time.

14. The cost of operations increases with the commencement of feasibility and engineering studies, and reaches a peak in the final, construction phase.

15. Paragraph 16 (b) of annex I E/CN.14/TRANS/46 of the report of the meeting of the co-ordinating committee in June 1971 stipulates that, following the prefeasibility studies "the co-ordinating Committee will commission a feasibility study of the highway project with the help of UNDP or co-operating countries to establish the economic justification for the building of the highway and also for identifying feeder road services required. The survey will also establish trends of future development of traffic for trade and of tourism".

16. This is the stage that has been reached. Although it was expected that the layout of the Trans-African Highway from Lagos to Mombasa would be finalized at this session of the Committee, there are 6 clearly identified national sections of the Highway over which feasibility and in some cases engineering studies still remain to be carried out. The problem to be resolved now, is whether the wishes to confer the role of "overseer" on the ECA for this phase of the project in respect of the entire highway, it being understood that responsibility will be shared between the Highway Bureau and the various national services with which it will co-operate closely. Whatever decision is taken, the funds which each State can obtain from financial bodies will have to be mobilized. It is unlikely that a financial body or a donor country will offer to finance this phase of the project in the form of assistance to the ECA, as was the case in the pre-feasibility studies. But whatever divisions of responsibility are decided between the national services of the States concerned and the Highway Bureau, the international character of the section of the Highway which passes through any given country will have to be taken into consideration, and will have some bearing on the economic justification of the project from the national point of view. The geometric standards and the importance of the highway to each country will depend on the place it is given in national priorities. It is understood that in each case the given section should be an all-weather road capable of being used by ordinary vehicles, as stated in the definition of the Trans African Highway. The Highway Bureau should therefore be involved at every stage of the project to ensure this.

17. As far as the administration of the project is concerned, the O'Sullivan report made some recommendations on which the Highway Bureau is inclined to request the defer decision, particularly as far as the position of the Highway Bureau within the ECA Secretariat is concerned, the question concerning the vocational training which is envisaged when

the project becomes operational, as well as those problems concerning the maintenance of the future International Highway.

18. As far as increasing the numbers of the members of the Co-ordinating Committee is concerned, it is possible to consider admitting the countries of the two Central and East African Sub-regions as associate members. The Bureau has already drawn attention to the necessity for such an increase in membership pointing out that a conference should be held to bring together the representatives of all those countries whose road networks could be usefully linked up with the Trans African Highway. It so happens that in addition to the six member countries of the Co-ordinating Committee, the matter is also of concern to Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Gabon, Niger, People's Republic of The Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia. The manner in which these countries should be organized to deal with a problem which is much greater and more complex, that of linking Central and East African road networks of which the Lagos-Mombasa link would constitute the backbone, is still to be decided. The Secretariat hopes to be able to do so during the conference which is planned to be held shortly.

19. As far as the position of the Bureau within the ECA Transport Section is concerned, it depends on the internal organization of the Secretariat and the transport experts which the Executive Secretary has at his disposal. The relations which exist between the Co-ordinator of the Bureau and the Cabinet of the Executive Secretary reflect this internal situation, and retain that flexibility to make it possible to adapt to developments which may take place at different phases of the project. The Co-ordinating Committee might leave it to the Executive Secretary to take appropriate action where necessary.

20. From its inception until the Highway is completed and in use, the administration of the project could be handled by an institutional structure which could be adapted to needs at each stage. Depending on its future financial standing, particularly if several government members of the Committee, if not all, show their willingness to take up commitments in common, through the intermediary of the Bureau, to carry out definite programmes within the project, the institutional structure could be different from that which prevails at present. In fact one could think of setting up a Trans African Highway Authority which would have corporate personality and financial autonomy. Although the questions to be settled concern either inter-governmental relations or relations between the United Nations and governments, they are more or less of an administrative nature and can be dealt with by an administrative unit such as the Highway Bureau. But whenever, two or more governments wish to deal with the banks even where these are public establishments, relations may lead to acts requiring legal capacity which the Highway

Bureau does not have seen that it has the same status as the United Nations. If the governments showed desire to take joint active responsibility for the operations of constructing the Trans African Highway, the problems could certainly be dealt within a more efficient manner by an Authority having corporate personality, authorized to borrow, to enter into contracts and to have access to the courts. Such an Authority would be able to establish a simple structure since its strength would reside, more in the delegation of powers received from the governments, than in the size of the budget which would be put at its disposal to carry out its activities. For the moment it is only a question of drawing the attention of the Co-ordinating Committee to such a possibility.

V. Conclusion

21. The results obtained by the Co-ordinating Committee and the Trans-African Highway Bureau are very encouraging when it is remembered that the operation came into being less than one year ago. It has become a tradition that each meeting concerning this project marks an important step forward. This meeting which opens today in Bangui would not have failed in this tradition if it leads to those decisions which the follow-up operations require.

22. The Co-ordinating Committee has to approve in particular:

(a) the Highway as proposed in Section A of Annex I which is attached to the present report;

(b) the programme of studies to be carried out as defined in section C of the same document attached.

23. It should also confirm and define the terms of reference of the Highway Bureau within the ECA for future stages of the project.

THE TRANS-AFRICAN HIGHWAYA. Trans African Highway Route

(a) Selected Route. Of the various alternate routes studied (see map), the following one has been selected and it is recommended that this be designated as the Trans-African Highway route:

- Kenya: Mombasa-Nairobi-Mau Summit-Kisumu-Busia
- Uganda: Busia-Buwayo-Kampala-Mbarara-Kasindi
- Zaire: Kasindi-Beni-Komanda-Mambasa-Kisangani-Dulia-Bondo-Ndu
- CAR: Ndu-Bangassou-Bambari-Bangui-Baoro-Garoua Boulai
- Cameroun: Garoua Boulai-Bertoua-Batchenga-Bafoussam-Bamenda-Mamfe-Ekok
- Nigeria: Ekok-Enugu-Benin City-Shagamu-Lagos

(b) Basis for selection of route. The selection of the Trans-African Highway route has been based on the following criteria:

- (i) Connecting main centres of population and economic and administrative activity;
- (ii) Minimizing costs of road construction and maintenance.

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In Kenya, the southern alternative through Kisumu has been selected on the basis of distance and population served.

In Uganda, the selected route passes through the heavily populated and active areas along the shores of Lake Victoria, gives better access to Rwanda and Burundi, and connects with areas which have good tourist development potential.

In Zaire, the route running northwards from Buta towards Bangassou has been chosen, because it is cheaper to improve than the Buta-Lisala-Bangui road.

In the Central African Republic, the existing good road Bangassou-Bangui-Baoro has no alternatives. The Baoro to Garoua Boulai section was selected on the basis of lower improvement costs and better benefits than the Baoro-Berberati-Bamboula alternative.

In Nigeria, only one route had been proposed and this has been selected for adoption as part of the Trans-African Highway project.

B. Improvements

(a) Improvement Priorities. The programme of work required to make the Trans-African Highway from Mombasa to Lagos a complete link would consist of:

- (i) Improvements that are already included in national development plans;
- (ii) Improvements which are not yet planned but which appear to be economically justifiable;
- (iii) Improvements which are not economically viable but which are necessary to complete the Trans-African Highway link.

Improvements embodied in national development plans have already been included in firm programmes and, therefore, there is no need for special action.

Improvements which appear to be economically viable and should be considered for inclusion in national programmes within the next three years are the following five projects:

- (i) Zaire: Beni-Komanda. Rehabilitation of 96 km. of road at an estimated cost of US\$2.0 million.
- (ii) Zaire: Komanda-Mambasa. Gravelling and rehabilitation of parts of 94 km. of road at an estimated cost of US\$400,000.
- (iii) CAR: Baoro-Garoua-Boulai. Improvements to about 20 per cent of 217 km. at an estimated cost of US\$920,000.
- (iv) Uganda: Busia-Buwayo. Surfacing of 19 km. of gravel road at an estimated cost of US\$840,000.
- (v) Uganda: Lake George-Bwera. Gravelling of 15 km. of road at an estimated cost of US\$350,000.

Improvements which are not economically viable, but necessary to complete the Trans-African Highway link are as follows:

- (i) Zaire: Bwera-Beni. Rehabilitation and gravelling of 78 km. of road at an estimated cost of US\$725,000.
- (ii) Zaire: Dulia-Bangassou. Selective gravelling and minor improvements over 332 km. of road, including replacement of ferry at Monga, at an estimated cost of US\$1.5 million.
- (iii) Cameroon: Mamfe-Ekok. Improvements and gravelling of 15 km. of road at an estimated cost of US\$220,000.

(b) Improvement Costs

The cost of improving or constructing sections of the 473 km. of roads which are not at present included in the national construction programmes, but appear to be economically viable to warrant improvement before 1975, is estimated at US\$4,170,000.

It is estimated that it will cost US\$2,445,000 to improve or construct sections of the 483 km. of roads which are not economically viable at present but are necessary for the completion of the Trans-African Highway.

Studies

Studies which should be undertaken by the Trans-African Highway Bureau, in co-operation with the Governments concerned, include the following:

- (a) Detailed feasibility studies of selected sections of the Trans-African Highway
- (b) Study of ways and means on how to connect the road links from the neighbouring States to the Trans-African Highway;
- (c) Study of the existing highway design standards in the six Trans-African Highway countries.
- (d) Study of present customs and immigration procedures in the Trans-African Highway countries with a view to recommending measures for improving international traffic on the Highway will include:
 - (i) Simplification of the regulations and procedures to be applied to the goods and passenger traffic including customs, passport, health and visa formalities; wherever possible;
 - (ii) Simplification and unification of customs rules and procedures governing the temporary importation of private and commercial vehicles;
 - (iii) Extension of 'in bond' facilities for goods in transit between ports and land-locked countries;
 - (iv) Vehicle insurance;
- (e) A study of existing road and traffic regulations in the Trans-African Highway countries with a view to determining gradual harmonization of these regulations.
- (f) Study with a view to suggesting ways and means for completing the missing links in the Trans-African Highway project.

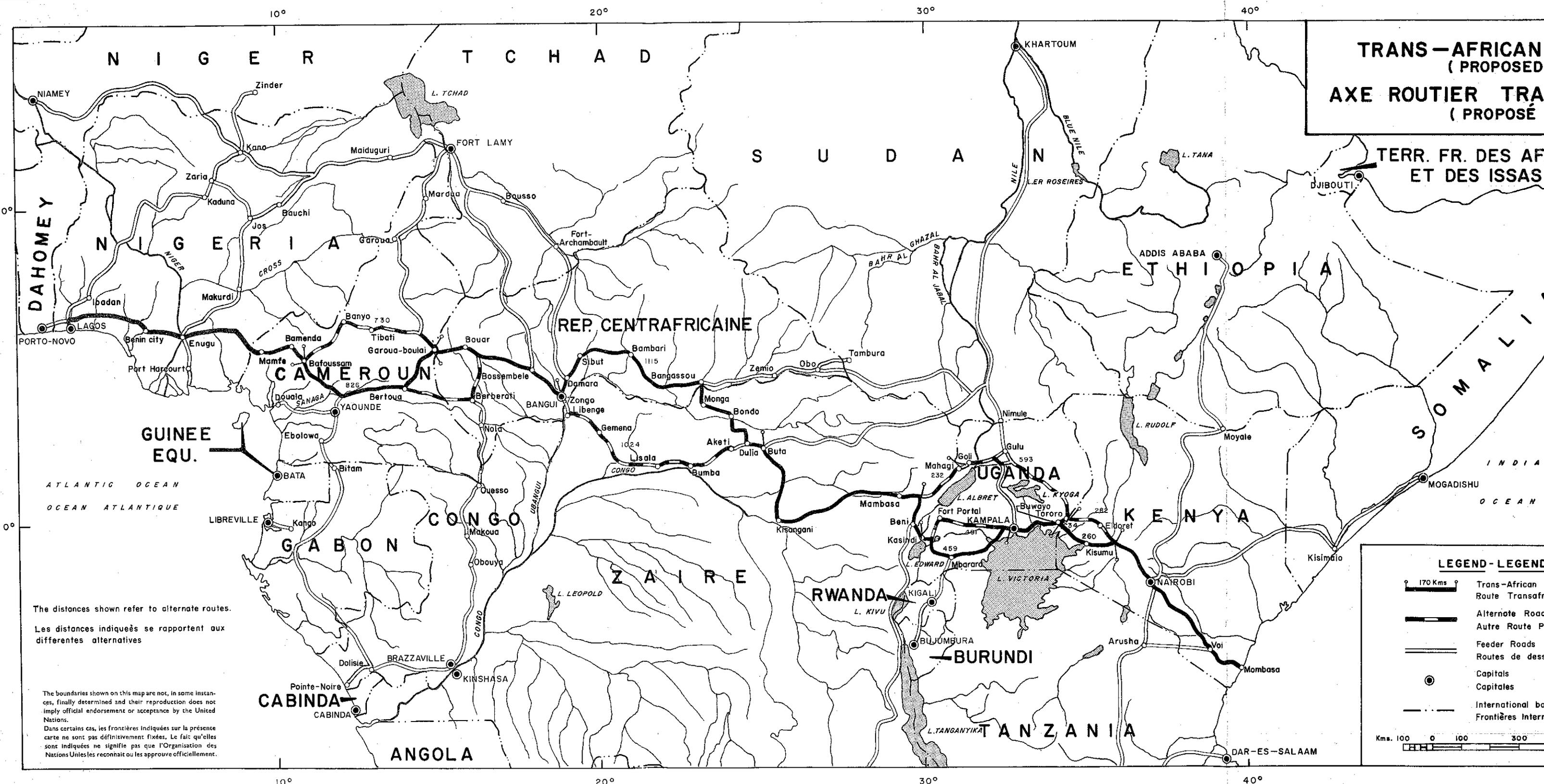
ANNEX II / ANNEXE II

TRANS-AFRICAN HIGHWAY / ROUTE TRANSAFRICAINE

List of main towns traversed by the trans-african highway /
Liste des principales agglomérations traversées par la route transafricaine

Mombasa	<u>Bangassou</u>
Voi	Bambari
Nairobi	Sibut
Kisumu	Bangui
<u>Busia</u>	Bossembele
Buwayo	Bouar
Kampala	<u>Garoua Boulaf</u>
Mbarara	Bertoua
<u>Kasindi</u>	Yaoundé (Batchenga)
Beni	Bafoussam
Mambasa	Bamenda
Kisangani	Mamfe
Buta	<u>Ekok</u>
Bondo	Enugu
Monga	Benin City
<u>Ndu</u>	Lagos

Names underlined are those on the boundaries /
Les noms soulignés sont ceux sur les frontières.



**TRANS-AFRICAN
(PROPOSED)
AXE ROUTIER TRAN
(PROPOSE)**

TERR. FR. DES AFAR
ET DES ISSAS

The distances shown refer to alternate routes.
Les distances indiquées se rapportent aux différentes alternatives

The boundaries shown on this map are not, in some instances, finally determined and their reproduction does not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
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LEGEND - LEGENDE

- Trans-African Highway / Route Transafricaine
- Alternate Road / Autre Route Possible
- Feeder Roads / Routes de desserte
- Capitals / Capitales
- International boundaries / Frontières Internationales

Kms. 100 0 100 300