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The Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair Lome, Togo,
18 November to 1 December 1985

Progress Report

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE FOURTH ALL-AFRICA TRADE FAIRIntroduction

1. In its resolution CM/Res.664(XXXI) adopted in Khartoum in July 1978, the Council of Ministers of the OAU decided that the Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair should be held in Accra, Ghana, in 1984. In accordance with that decision the Government of Ghana undertook necessary arrangements and fixed the period February 1 to 15, 1984 as dates for the Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair. This information was brought to the attention of all Member States of the OAU. However, due to unforeseen developments, the Government of Ghana rescinded its offer to host the Fair and Member States were again duly informed.

2. In May 1984 the 3rd meeting of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of the whole on Trade and Finance for Africa Development decided to accept the offer of the Republic of Togo to host the Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair in 1985. A 15 member Organising Committee for the Fair was set up to assist with the organisation and arrangement for the Fair. The following countries constitute the Committee:

- Algeria, Angola, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Malawi, Nigeria, Sudan (former host), Swaziland, Togo (chairman), Uganda and Zimbabwe.

3. The purpose of this document is to present in brief the major activities undertaken in this connection towards the organising of All-Africa Trade Fair.

Major activities

4. The first meeting of the Organising Committee was held in March 1985 in Lome, Togo. The purpose of that meeting was to discuss all organisational matters and arrangements including the major activities that should be undertaken during the Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair. Secondly, the question of the precise date for the Fair was treated as priority. Thirdly, a draft budget for the Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair for the purpose of requesting a subvention from the OAU was prepared by the Committee to cover all the proposed activities including publicity campaign and promotional tours.

5. The activities which were identified to be organised during the Fair include seminars on the following subjects:

- (i) food self-sufficiency within the context of the Lagos Plan of Action;
- (ii) trends of Intra-African trade since the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action
- (iii) the Industrial Development Decade in Africa and Prospects for Investment and Finance.

6. The Committee also agreed on the need to organise an investment forum and a workshop for Directors of Stands. There will also be cultural shows.

7. The report of the first meeting of the Committee was circulated to all OAU Member States, and contacts were made with the collaborating international organisation with a view to securing their assistance and support for the activities identified by the Committee. The draft budget proposed by the Committee was submitted to the OAU Advisory Committee on Budgetary, Financial and Administrative Matters. The proposals of the Organising Committee were generally accepted by the OAU; however, on proposals for payment of rent subsidies to all participating Member States, and hospitality expenditures, it was decided that rent subsidies should be paid only to African Least Developed Countries while a token amount was made for hospitality due to current economic crisis and financial difficulties affecting all African countries. The global sum approved as OAU's subvention, therefore was US\$ 425,000.00.

Second meeting of the Organising Committee - May 1985

8. The purpose of the Second meeting was to review the implementation of the decision and recommendations of the First meeting, and to consider the modalities for advancing the preparatory arrangements for the Fair. The report of the Second meeting was also circulated to all OAU Member States and the relevant organisations. It was clear from the report that even though a budget covering the OAU subvention had been approved not much had been done in terms of formal invitations to all the Member States and institutions, the preparation of Rules for the Fair, etc. It was emphasised that on account of shortage of time, effort should be intensified to implement the decisions and the recommendations of the First meeting. A Third meeting of the Committee was accordingly fixed for the end of July 1985.

The Third meeting of the Organising Committee - July 1985

9. The Committee noted that the decisions of the First meeting were, by and large, implemented especially with regard to letters of invitation to all Member States of the OAU; the preparation and circulation of publicity materials; brochures containing the essential information, including application forms for participation in the Fair etc. After a careful consideration of the progress made so far, the Committee gave general guidelines and recommendations on the modalities and approaches for an effective publicity campaign in Africa by radio, television and journals. Various technical issues were raised on the general administrative matters, including

customs procedures, insurance arrangements and the conditions for sale of exhibits. The Committee recommended that all Member States should, in turn, undertake publicity campaigns in their respective countries so as to ensure full and effective participation in the Fair by the exporters and manufacturers organisations etc. The report of the Third meeting of the Organising Committee has been circulated to all Member States of the OAU and relevant organisations.

Activities to be organised during the Fair

10. Discussions have been held with the Secretariat of UNIDO on the activities to be organised during the Fair and an agreement has been reached on the following activities that UNIDO will undertake in cooperation with the OAU and ECA:

- (a) investment promotion;
- (b) seminar on the Industrial Development Decade for Africa;
- (c) a follow-up to the Industrial Technology Symposium which was organised during the Third All-Africa Trade Fair in Khartoum;
- (d) industrial promotion activities including films on various aspects of Industrial Development, a computerised system of project evaluation.

11. In addition UNIDO will contribute to the seminar on food self-sufficiency, and undertake such consultations with FAO as would be necessary to ensure the success of the symposium.

Conclusion

In spite of the apparent lateness in starting the preparatory arrangements for the Fair, it is very hopeful that there will be an effective African participation, both in terms of the total number of countries and in the composition of their exhibits. To ensure the success of the Fair, the Conference of Ministers of Trade is urged to launch an appeal to all Member States to participate effectively in the Fair; undertake the effective publicity campaigns of the Fair in their respective countries and; mobilise their private sector including the Chambers of Commerce, exporters and manufacturers associations to ensure that they all contribute to the success of the Fair.