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UNITED NATIONS
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**THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS SPECIAL
SESSION ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN
AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
AND
MEETING OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL
ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES**

CAIRO, EGYPT 23-31 MARCH 1995

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**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

MISSION REPORT

Staff member: Robert M. Okello

Division: Transport, Communications and Tourism

Lieu: Cairo, Egypt

Date: 23-31 March 1991.

Purpose: To participate in:

- (i) The Seventeenth Extra-Ordinary Session of the Council of OAU Ministers;**
- (ii) Meeting of the African Regional Economic Communities.**

**THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
SPECIAL SESSION ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN
AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT**

AND

MEETING OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES

Cairo, Egypt, 25-31 March 1995

1. Introduction.

1. The Sixtieth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity Meeting in Tunis, Tunisia in June 1994, decided that a special session of the Council be held in 1995 "to identify practical measures for relaunching the development process in Africa." The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, as part of its role in the **Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat**, actively participated in the preparations for and servicing the meetings which were held in Cairo. Egypt, from 25- 28 March 1995.

2. The tremendous political as well as economic changes which have occurred in the world over the past few years and the persistent socio-economic crisis in Africa prompted African Ministers of Foreign Affairs to recommend the convening of an extraordinary session of the OAU Council of Ministers solely devoted to the review of Africa's economic and social issues. This recommendation was further endorsed by the 30th Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Tunis, Tunisia in June 1994.

3. The main concern behind this initiative was to ensure that Africa takes the required steps to reverse its economic decline and the marked tendency towards its marginalization, in order to remain a credible partner in world affairs. In taking this decision, the Ministers made it clear that this extraordinary session should not result in a general statement of commitments which would not be implemented, as was the tendency in the past. Rather the outcome should be an actionable agenda which African countries and their development partners must be able and willing to implement. The purpose of this note is to review the preparations for the session and its outcome.

4. Following the above Council meeting, the **Joint Secretariat** also held a one-day consultative meeting with the **Regional Economic Communities (RECs)** to discuss the draft Protocol on Relations Between the Regional Economic Communities and the African Economic Community (AEC) to be annexed to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, as well as operational modalities for cooperation between the RECs and the AEC.

2. Preparations for the Cairo Meetings

5. As indicated above, the Ministers were of the view that, in order to make the expected impact, the extraordinary session should not be a mere replication of earlier gatherings on the economic situation in Africa, which achieved little in terms of concrete and implementable measures. In particular, they felt that the session should draw lessons from shortcomings which led to the inadequate implementation of similar initiatives such as the Lagos Plan of Action(LPA), Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery(APPER) and the United Nations Programme for African Economic Recovery and Development(UN-PAERD). The outcome of the session was therefore to be a concise and action-oriented programme which addresses the key issues impeding Africa's development and recommending immediately implementable measures aimed at improving the situation. To this end, a single document would be presented to the session.

6. In pursuance of this clear directive, the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat started, as early as August 1994, the preparations for the extraordinary session. The first task consisted of identifying the clusters of issues around which the document would be prepared. Subsequently, the Joint Secretariat drafted a preliminary document titled, **Towards relaunching the African development effort**. This document was revised on several occasions before it was submitted to a meeting of experts of member States held in Addis Ababa in December 1994 under the title: **Report of the Secretary-General to the Special Session of the Council of Ministers on Economic and Social Issues in African Development**.

7. That report, including the amendments of the experts was later presented to and reviewed by the Sixty-first Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers in January 1995. Subsequently, the Joint Secretariat decided to draft a new document which would draw from the previous one and would conform to the initial request of Ministers in terms of an actionable agenda, to be considered by the Extraordinary Session of the Council of Ministers.

8. The second document was reviewed and revised at a meeting held in February 1995 in Cairo between the Joint Secretariat, the Arab Republic of Egypt (the host country of the Extraordinary Session) and Tunisia (Current Chairman of the OAU). This draft document, titled, **Relaunching African Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Agenda for Action**, was circulated to all Divisions of ECA and several comments were received, some of which were eventually incorporated in the final document from Cairo.

9. The Council meeting in Cairo took place between 27 and 28 March, 1995 and was preceded by the meeting of Senior Officials from 25 to 26 March 1995. The Council Session was opened by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. Mr. M.D. Sarr, the Acting Executive Secretary of ECA, delivered the message of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Butros Butros-Ghali (Annex I to this report).

3. Outcome of the meetings.

10. The meetings were serious and may be fairly considered that a small step has been taken in the right direction in that the African countries seem to have finally accepted the new regime in international development relationship, namely, that Africa's development is Africa's burden. The document issued in Cairo clearly reflects this realization.

11. The **Agenda**, which is divided into three major sections, lays the greatest emphasis on what Africa can and must do for herself. The required input from Africa's development partners is to supplement and support Africa's efforts in the first place. The **Agenda** (the draft in Annex II to this report; final version not yet out) may be summarized as follows:

- (i) **What we can do for ourselves**, under which specific actions were defined the following six categories;
 - (a) Democracy, Governance, Peace, Security, Stability and Sustainable Development;
 - (b) Food Security;
 - (c) Capacity Building and Human Resources Development;
 - (d) Structural Transformation of African Economies (industrialization, mineral resources and energy, transport and communications, trade, environment);
 - (e) Effective Mobilization of Resources;
 - (f) Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration.
- (ii) **What we require from our development partners**, in three major areas:
 - (a) Understanding, appreciation and support of Africa's development efforts;
 - (b) Trade and development;
 - (c) Africa's external debt.
- (iii) **Follow-up Mechanism**, defines actions at national, regional and continental levels.

12. However, there still remains a long way to go before Africa can attain its goals of sustainable development. For instance, while the Cairo discussions were long on rehash of the old, well-known problems in Africa's development, it was rather short on concrete actions to address these problems. This shortcoming should nevertheless not be taken as a result of lack of effort; it is rather due to the fact that it is a difficult step. Therefore, concerted effort will be required to translate the good will expressed by the countries into a real **actionable agenda**.

12. Another related problem to defining the necessary action, is that of the institutional mechanism for follow-up. There was a definite split in opinions among the majority which favoured the supervision of the implementation of the **Cairo Agenda for Action** by a committee of Ministers of the Council, appointed on a sub-regional representation as defined in the procedures of OAU.

13. However, a strong minority objected to the appointment of such a committee on the following (in my view quite valid) grounds:

- (i) There is need to avoid creation of new committees when existing ones could be charged with the task (e.g. the Permanent Steering Committee.)
- (ii) The Council or the PSC are made up of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, who might lack the competence of supervising economic and social programmes. In this regard, it was suggested that the ECOSOC of the AEC be charged with this task.
- (iii) The method of regional representation being used by the OAU is antiquated and does not take into account the realities of 1995. For instance, while Central Africa region with ten member states is represented by three members and North Africa with six member States has a representation of two, Southern Africa region with eleven member States has a representation of only two!

14. Consequently, the issue of the follow-up mechanism was effectively shelved, pending further consultations.

4. The role of ECA in realizing the Cairo Agenda for Action.

15. The OAU Secretary General is called upon, within the framework of the **Joint Secretariat**, to work together with the ECA Executive Secretary and the President of ADB, "to monitor and report regularly to the Council on the implementation of these decisions." There is, however, sufficient room in the **Agenda** for ECA to make real contributions. Specifically, concerning action in the area of **what we can do for ourselves**, many of the issues therein identified in fact originated from ECA. It is therefore a challenge for ECA to identify those activities within its areas of competence and devise practical measures to be carried out within its work programme.

16. In addition, there is need to maintain the momentum from Cairo. Although the **Agenda for Action** enters into effect only after its approval by the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government in June 1995, some thought should be given in defining follow-up activities by the Joint Secretariat.

5. Meeting of the Regional Economic Communities with the OAU

17. A one-day meeting was held on 29 March 1995 with officials from the Regional Economic Communities (RECS) to discuss two items:

- (a) Protocol on the relations between the African Economic Community (AEC) and the RECs;
- (b) Operational Modalities for Cooperation.

19. Only three of the five RECs were represented at the meeting; Economic Community of Central African States (Executive Secretary); Southern African Development Community (Deputy Executive Secretary); and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern African States (Expert). The OAU was represented by Ambassador Dede, Assistant Secretary General, and four officers; and ECA by Robert M. Okello, member of the Steering Committee for the Joint Secretariat.

20. The meeting reviewed in detail the draft protocol on relations and suggested several amendments for its improvement.

21. Regarding operational modalities for cooperation, it was suggested that a meeting of the Chief Executives of the five RECs and the three institutions of the Joint Secretariat be held as soon as possible. Tentatively, the date has been identified as one day preceeding the next meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers in June 1995 in Addis Ababa. It should be recalled here that the Joint Secretariat had in March-April 1994 mounted missions to all the RECs Secretariats to consult on working relations. So far there has not been any follow-up to the reports of those missions.

22. An area which deserves attention is that of relations between the RECs and the other IGOs in their respective sub-regions. Specifically, in Central Africa, the survival of ECCAS is at stake in view of the creation of CEMAC (the Economic and Monetary Union of Central Africa). In this regard, it was proposed that both ECCAS and CEMAC be invited to the planned meeting between the Joint Secretariat and the RECs. The implications of such a move on the status of other IGOs (such as CEPGL) could be serious.

ANNEX I

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

MESSAGE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL
TO THE SEVENTEENTH EXTRAORDINARY SESSION
OF THE OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

CAIRO, 27 MARCH 1995

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity to hold this extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers, exclusively devoted to economic issues is particularly timely. Fifteen years have elapsed since the Lagos Plan of Action, during which there have been deep-rooted changes at all levels in Africa, and the world in general, and it is important that African countries, at the highest political level, should consider together the economic situation of the continent and its place in international economic relations. I would therefore like to congratulate the Government and people of Egypt, and particularly H.E. Mr. Hosni Mubarak for having taken the initiative to host this important session.

The economic and social conditions in a large number of African countries continue to be a matter of concern and, in many cases, they are aggravated by political instability and internal conflicts. Their foreign debt is constantly increasing; debt-servicing weighs heavily on their economies, inspite of the commendable efforts made by creditor countries, individually or within existing mechanisms. The burden of multilateral debt, in particular, is such that there is urgent need to consider the appropriate modalities to reduce its adverse effects on the African economies.

Furthermore, Official Development Assistance to African countries is stagnating and even declining, while foreign direct investment to Africa is negligible if compared with other regions in the world. In this connection, the emergence or the strengthening of regional economic groupings and the conclusion of the Uruguay Round agreements are other challenges that Africa must take up to assume its rightful place in the international community.

However, the situation I have just described should not lead to pessimism. Quite the contrary, the progress achieved by a number of African countries, in democratisation, popular participation, economic reform and regional cooperation and integration proves that Africa does not intend to be marginalised. In this connection, this extraordinary session devoted to a limited number of priority issues is additional proof of the determination of African Governments to deploy their efforts in this direction.

The United Nations and the entire system in general, will do its utmost to support the efforts of African countries in relaunching their economies. As in the case of the Agenda for Peace, Africa's specific concerns are, to a great extent, taken into consideration in the Agenda for Development which was considered by the 49th Session of the General Assembly.

Similarly, the conclusions of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in this very city of Cairo in September 1994, and those of the International Summit on Social Development, held in Copenhagen at the beginning of this month, took full account of the common positions of African countries. I am certain the situation will be the same in the World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September 1995.

Furthermore, in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 90s, the United Nations system has formulated a Plan of Action, currently being implemented, for the economic recovery and development of Africa. This Plan of Action puts emphasis on such important aspects as the development of human resources and self-sufficiency and food security, the mobilisation of resources and regional cooperation. It is gratifying to note that these aspects feature among the priority issues to be considered by this meeting. Likewise, the Administrative Committee for Coordination, during its last two sessions, dealt mainly with the economic situation in Africa. Finally, the next session of the

Economic and Social Council, to be held in July 1995, will also be devoted primarily to Africa.

There is therefore convergence between African Governments and the United Nations System, not only of the objectives to be pursued, but also of on-going initiatives. While wishing you every success in your deliberations, I would like to assure you that, on my part, I will do my utmost to ensure that the operational programmes of the world Organisation fully contribute to a sustainable development of our African continent.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali

ANNEX II

ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN UNITY

ORGANIZAÇÃO DA
UNIDADE AFRICANA



ORGANISATION DE
L'UNITE AFRICAINE

منظمة الوحدة الافريقية

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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
Seventeenth Extra-Ordinary Session
25 - 28 March, 1995
Cairo, Egypt

ECM/Draft/Rpt (XVII)

DRAFT REPORT

DRAFT REPORT

1. The Seventeenth Extra-Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers was held in Cairo, Egypt on 27 and 28 March, 1995 at the kind invitation of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt. In attendance were Member States and observers from international organizations.

2. The Session took place at the Cairo International Conference Centre. It was divided into three parts namely:

- the opening ceremony
- deliberations in camera
- closing session.

I. OPENING CEREMONY

3. The opening ceremony took place on 27 March, 1995 at 11 a.m. under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malawi, Chairman of the Sixty-first Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers.

4. The ceremony was graced by the presence of their Excellencies Mr. Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Mr. Blaise Compaore, President of the Republic of Burkina Faso.

5. After declaring the Session open, the Chairman of the Council called on participants to rise for the OAU Anthem.

6. He then invited H.E. President Hosni Mubarak to address the session.

7. In his Statement, President Mubarak first extended a fraternal welcome to all the participants. He said that he and the people of Egypt were very happy to have them in their midst. The President reviewed the recent fundamental changes in the world which were likely to affect African States. He underscored the challenges and the dangers posed by such changes to the third world.

8. He wondered about the future of the continent. He recalled the various difficulties facing our countries as well as the immense resources of the continent, particularly human resources. He said that Africa should not give way to pessimism and despair.

9. President Mubarak emphasised the importance of relaunching Africa's economic and social development as well as the necessary conditions towards achieving that goal. He stressed, among other things, the resolution of conflicts, with special emphasis on the OAU Mechanism set up for that purpose. He also stressed the importance of stability, peace and common economic venture. He called on Member States to take the necessary measures for the establishment of the African Economic Community as recommended by the Abuja Treaty, highlighting the possibilities that existed towards that end.

10. President Mubarak pointed out the causes which tend to marginalise Africa on the international scene. He called on Member States to examine the consequences arising from the GATT Agreements and the liberal market. He expressed his grave concern over the ever-growing debt crisis and its negative effects on development.

11. The Egyptian Head of State placed special emphasis on the social dimensions of development. He mentioned the lessons to be learnt from the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in September 1994 as well as those of the World Summit on Social Development which took place in Copenhagen in March 1995. He underscored the importance of the United Nations Decade on Poverty which will be proclaimed in 1996, pointing out the special attention that should be given to women and children as well as to education.

12. In conclusion, President Mubarak expressed the hope that Africa which is rich in human and material resources would draw inspiration from its cultural values to promote the continent's development. He also expressed the hope that the Session would come up with a new strategy for Africa.

13. Replying to President Mubarak, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lesotho on behalf of all the delegations thanked the Egyptian Head of State for his inspiring and thought-provoking

Statement. He expressed the conviction that the President's Statement would guide Council in its deliberations. He expressed satisfaction at the warm and fraternal hospitality extended to all the delegations.

14. The Lesotho Minister of Foreign Affairs highlighted the new challenge posed by the economic and social development. He said that only a united and concerted action by all Africans would prevent the continent from being marginalised, adding that the Extraordinary Session was timely.

15. The Minister intimated that Africa had immense potentials and referred to the several Declarations and Plans adopted in the past. He called on all Member States to demonstrate renewed political will so that all those Declarations and Plans could be implemented. He said that the Session should study in greater detail the document prepared by the meeting of experts on 25 and 26 March 1995.

16. Following the departure of the Heads of State, the OAU Secretary General, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim addressed the Session. He began by expressing his gratitude to the Government of Egypt for having accepted to host the extraordinary session. He said that Egypt's decision to host the extraordinary session was a clear proof of its commitment towards the socio-economic development of the continent. He thanked President Mubarak for his inspiring Statement.

17. The Secretary General said that the purpose of the session was not to map out a development strategy or to draw up another development plan. He said that the development strategies and plans that were adopted in the past were still valid. He mentioned among others, the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act, Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery and the Declaration of the 1990 Summit on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation.

18. He said that despite those plans, programmes and declarations, the socio-economic situation was not only precarious but was also worsening. He substantiated his argument with facts and figures, adding that Africa was still dependent on the outside

world. He drew the necessary lessons from such a dependence for the attention of participants.

19. The Secretary General said that among the reasons for this extraordinary session were the recent developments in the world economy and their repercussions on the development efforts in Africa. To illustrate that, he mentioned the recent GATT Agreement, reduction in development aid, the threat to resource flows, the decline of private capital and direct foreign investment.

20. The Secretary General also highlighted other negative factors and gave his viewpoint on the debt crisis and the brain drain.

21. The Secretary General did not confine himself to this bleak picture. He said that there was reason for hope and that it was possible to reverse the trends. He stated that possible ways and means should be found in relaunching Africa's economic and social development.

22. To that end, he proposed measures to be taken at the continental level, including peace, security and stability for development as well as the democratisation of our societies.

23. The Secretary General placed the challenges facing Africa on two levels. At the national level, he cited food security, the environment, health, education and training as well as the role of women. He underlined the need for economic integration as recommended by the Abuja Treaty. At the international level, he requested from our partners understanding, support and a clear response to our economic concerns.

24. The message of the UN Secretary General was read by the Executive Secretary a.i. of the ECA, Mr. M.D. Sarr.

25. In his message which was delivered to the meeting by Dr. M.D. Sarr, the Acting Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary General of the United Nations, noted the timeliness of the Special Session devoted exclusively to social and economic issues in Africa. He recalled that fifteen years had elapsed since the Lagos

Plan of Action during which there had been deep-rooted changes at all levels in Africa and the world in general, and that it was important that African countries, at the highest political level, should consider together the economic situation of the continent and its place in international economic relations.

26. While acknowledging the various well known economic and social problems which Africa is facing, Dr. Boutros-Ghali however emphasised that significant progress had been achieved by a number of African countries in the critical areas of development such as democratisation, popular participation, economic reforms and regional cooperation. Consequently, he pledged the support of the entire United Nations System to the efforts of African countries in relaunching their economies. Specifically referring to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, he stated that the UN system had formulated a Plan of Action which was being implemented for the economic recovery and development in Africa. That Plan of Action emphasised several important aspects of development such as human resource development, self-sufficiency, food security, mobilisation of resources as well as regional cooperation.

27. He concluded by emphasising the convergence between African governments and the UN system, not only on the objectives to be pursued, but also on the on-going initiatives. He therefore assured the meeting that he would, on his part, do the utmost to ensure that the operational programmes of the UN fully contribute to the sustainable development of Africa.

II. Election of Officers

28. Council elected the following officers:

Chairman	:	Egypt
First Vice-Chairman	:	Togo
Second Vice-Chairman	:	Central African Republic
Third Vice-Chairman	:	Kenya
Rapporteur	:	Malawi

29. The Drafting Committee was composed as follows: Tunisia, Libya, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Uganda, Eritrea, Mauritius, Burundi, Gabon, Botswana and Angola.

III. Draft Agenda and Organisation of Work

30. Council adopted the following agenda:

- (1) Opening of the Meeting.
- (2) Organisation of Work.
- (3) Adoption of the Agenda.
- (4) Consideration of the document:
 - "Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Agenda for Action"
- (5) Closure of the Meeting.

31. The Session was held as follows:

27 March	:	11.00 - 13.00 hours
		16.00 - 19.00 hours
28 March	:	11.00 - 13.00 hours
		16.00 - 19.00 hours

IV. Consideration of the Document "Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development : The Cairo Agenda for Action"

32. The above document was presented to the Council by the Rapporteur of the meeting of Senior Officials who had presided over the meeting of the Drafting Committee. The presentation focussed on the contents of the different sections of the document.

33. The Assistant Administrator of the UNDP for Africa, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf addressed the Council and suggested that a special message be sent to the G.7 Summit in Halifax in June 1995 on the subject of Africa's external debt. She made specific proposals for debt cancellation including targets and amounts of

debt cancellation that Africa should seek. The issues relating to Commodity Diversification were also raised.

34. Before the commencement of a discussion of the working document, the Chairman read to Council a brief message addressed to him by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali.

35. The document was discussed section by section by the Council during which new issues were raised. Emphasis was placed on the need to focus effort on implementation of decisions and programmes and on strengthening Africa's negotiating position through collective action. In this connection, African governments should create an environment favourable for increased investment, and implement programmes to improve Africa's image and the international perception of the continent.

36. The new issues that were emphasised in the debate included :

- the need for African countries to be more discerning in accepting advice from international institutions;
- a proposal for African countries to establish commodity cartels in order to ensure better prices;
- a programme for population control;
- programmes for the development of technology including South/South cooperation, commercialization of research findings etc.;
- more efficient use of Africa's resources including programmes for the return of Africa's expertise and reverse of brain drain;
- the need to be specific on the issue of debt cancellation in terms of concrete requests with amounts and targets in this regard.

37. Other new issues raised included the involvement of the people at the grass-roots level in all aspects of development; the importance of a vibrant industrial private sector in the implementation of the Cairo Agenda; the importance of the policy of regionalization and decentralization in creating a feeling of belonging in the people; the particular needs of the island countries and the need to protect African heritage, promote tourism and environmental protection.

38. A delegation raised the issue of internal conflicts and their impact on the neighbouring countries, and wondered whether such situations would not call for sanctions in view of the instability and destabilisation such conflicts cause. It was stressed however that rather than resorting to sanctions, programmes on training, education in democracy and governance, particularly for the youth could be envisaged.

39. Another delegation raised the problem of the call by the major powers for the abolish of UNIDO and UNCTAD and warned that Africa would lose from the technical expertise resources and assistance from these institutions.

40. The meeting agreed to voice Africa's concern on this development.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

41. In its last session, the Council considered and adopted the amended text of the Cairo Programme of Action.

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
Seventeenth Extra-Ordinary Session
25 - 28 March, 1995
Cairo, Egypt

ECM/2 (XVII) Rev.3

**RELAUNCHING AFRICA'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT:**

THE CAIRO AGENDA FOR ACTION.

RELAUNCHING AFRICA'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:
THE CAIRO AGENDA FOR ACTION.

I. Preamble

1. We, the Ministers of Foreign/External Affairs of the Organization of African Unity, meeting at the 17th Extraordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, in Cairo, Egypt, from 27-28 March 1995, have undertaken an in-depth and critical review of the political, economic and social situation in our continent, as presented in the **Report of the Secretary General to the Special Session of the Council of Ministers on Economic and Social Issues in African Development.**

2. Since the beginning of the 1990s, changes have occurred in the world, particularly in the political, economic and social arena. These include a growing tendency, especially in the developed countries to establish, strengthen and enlarge economic groupings in the form of trading blocs such as the Single European Market; the conclusion of the Uruguay Round Agreements, the establishment of the World Trade Organization; and the further advances in information science and production technology. These developments have been buttressed by the dominance of the free market economic system based on competition, efficiency and productivity. Consequently, Africa must take new steps to ensure that it becomes an active partner in the world economic system. In this regard, Africa must adopt a new vision for its development and translate this vision into appropriate programmes. This approach will place Africa in a position to fully participate, as a credible partner, in the world system. In this new spirit, Africa will be able to promote its fundamental interests and concerns.

3. For many years, we have adopted at the national, regional and continental levels many plans, strategies and programmes for the development of our countries, individually and collectively. Unfortunately, these plans and programmes were not adequately implemented by the majority of our countries and in some cases were completely paralysed and jeopardized by incessant civil strife and natural calamities. To rectify this situation, African countries

must take effective measures within specified time frame to ensure the satisfactory implementation and follow-up of decisions that we have made for the development of the continent. In this context, people should be the centre and object of development of our continent. To this end, governments should ensure the involvement of the people in the conception, implementation and monitoring of development plans, programmes and projects. Special attention should be paid to the full involvement of women in the social and economic development efforts. We should make all efforts to attract and retain African expertise and reverse the "brain drain" from our countries.

4 At the international level, numerous plans and programmes have been adopted by the UN General Assembly and other fora with the expressed intention of providing greater support for the development of Africa. Unfortunately, the achievements in this area have been unsatisfactory due particularly to the lack of adequate external resources.

5. We are deeply concerned that the socio-economic situation in Africa has remained precarious despite the many efforts made by our countries, individually and collectively, to lay a solid foundation for Africa's development. In all these endeavours, we have been guided by the principle of collective self-reliance in order to achieve self-sustaining development of our countries. We reaffirm our commitment to this principle.

6. These and other recent developments have prompted us to meet in Cairo in an Extra-Ordinary Session. It is an opportune occasion to seriously review, analyse and reassess the root causes of economic and social problems with a view to recommending remedial measures and lasting solutions that should be taken by African governments and peoples, with the support of the international community.

7. In assessing these problems, we are convinced that Africa's underdevelopment can be overcome. Africa is a resilient continent. Indeed, Africa is a continent in transition. It has

immense human and natural resources. With a strong will, more determination, planning and vision, we can make Africa an economic power that it ought to be.

8. We reaffirm that Africa's development is first and foremost the responsibility of our governments and peoples. We are determined to lay a firm foundation for a human-centred, equitable and sustainable development on the basis of sound economic policies, social justice and collective self-reliance, in order to achieve accelerated structural transformation of our economies.

9. On the basis of the above considerations, while reaffirming our commitment to the Lagos Plan of Action, we have adopted **The Cairo Agenda for Action** which offers recommendations for consideration and action by our governments and peoples, as well as by the international community for relaunching Africa's economic and social development.

II. What we can do for ourselves.

(a). Democracy, Governance, Peace, Security, Stability and Sustainable development

10. We recognize and resolve that democracy, good governance, peace, security, stability and justice are among the most essential factors in African socio-economic development. Without democracy and peace, development is not possible; and, without development, peace is not durable. In this regard, we recall the relevance of the Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU of 11 July, 1990 on the Political and Socio-economic situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes taking place in the world. We, are therefore committed to take the following actions:

- i) launch programmes to promote national unity especially through the politics of inclusion and a culture of tolerance among the various segments of our people and

among the countries of Africa, based on the principles of respect of human rights and dignity, free and fair elections, as well as respect for the freedom of the press, speech, association and conscience;

- ii) ensure the speedy promotion of good governance, characterized by accountability, probity, transparency, equal application of the rule of law, and a clear separation of powers, as an objective and a condition for rapid and sustainable development in African societies. A policy of regionalization and decentralization is essential for ensuring the full participation of all the people, particularly the rural population at the grass-roots level, in their own development, and for promoting a feeling of belonging;
- iii) It is essential to clearly define the role of government and the private sector in development. Governments should make special efforts to encourage the participation of the private sector in the development process.
- iv) take measures for the eradication of the root causes of refugees and displaced persons in our continent as well as for their speedy return and re-settlement in their countries of origin and expediting the search for lasting solutions to this problem of refugees.
- v) give the maximum political and financial support to the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, for its effective peace-making operations, by involving all segments of the population and mobilizing adequate official and private resources for the OAU Peace Fund.

(b) Food security

11. Africa is essentially an agricultural and pastoral continent. Yet, food and agricultural output has declined substantially since the 1960s. Consequently, most of our countries are net food importers. While civil strife, drought, desertification and other environmental factors have contributed to the decline in food production, policies which did not give enough attention to food crops are an important part of the explanation.

12. An improvement in agricultural performance is required to provide food supplies essential to raising nutritional standards and to feeding the rapidly growing population without excessive dependence on external sources. The benefits of economic growth should be expanded to the whole population particularly in the rural areas where poverty is more pronounced. In this regard:

- i) Agricultural promotion should not be excessively centred on traditional export commodities. Food crops, especially those produced and/or consumed by poor people should be given special attention.
- ii) Appropriate measures should also be made to develop and extend livestock and fisheries as part of the overall food security strategy.
- iii) Efficient and standardized means of stock-piling of surplus food should be devised for use in times of famine, drought and other hardships.
- iv) Appropriate means should be made for the national management of the water resources and the preservation of water against pollution.
- v) Reafforestation programmes should be vigorously pursued as a means of checking the rate of desertification of arable lands and preserving their fertility.

- vi) Current initiatives to formulate a framework for the development and operationalization of a Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP) should be finalized as soon as possible.

(c) Capacity building and Human resources development

13. The development of human resources is fundamental to the sustainable and equitable development of Africa. The primacy of human resources development must therefore be maintained in all African Member States economic and social policies. In this connection, the educational and training systems which remain the key to economic and social development should be adapted to the needs of our societies, with emphasis on technical, scientific and technological education, thereby ensuring that education and training are commensurate with the exigencies of the labour market. Priority focus should be given to increasing Africa's capacity to implement its development plans. Human resource development also entails the elimination of gender based discrimination. Necessary legislation needs to be passed at national level to remove all such discriminatory practices that exist to provide for the protection of the girl child and women in Africa while extending to them equal opportunities as regards health, education, employment and other civic rights.

14. Member States should give priority in their development programmes to the basic needs of the people by developing appropriate infrastructure (such as rural roads, potable water supply...), meeting basic food requirements, providing primary health services, education and skills and generating productive and remunerative employment opportunities as a means of eradicating poverty. African countries should endeavour to implement the **African Common Position on Human and Social Development**; the OAU Declaration of 1991 on the Employment Crisis in Africa; the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development; the Programme of Action of the ICPD (1994); the Plan of Action for the Promotion of Cultural Industries (1992); the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government on Health as a

basis for Development (1987), as well as the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development (1995).

15. Africa's low science and technology base is highly inadequate for the requirements of modern development processes such as agriculture, health, etc. There is therefore an urgent need to build up and strengthen Africa's capacity in the field of science and technology, if Africa is to be efficient and competitive in its production and thus participate in the increased flows of advanced technologies and globalization of production processes. African governments are therefore called upon to:

- i) give high priority to building national and regional capacities in the area of science and technology as the basis and means for all development activities and hence create conditions for more vigorous adaptation and application of science and technology for sustainable development. Each Member State should therefore devote a minimum of one percent of its GDP to the development of science and technology and foster co-operation between national and regional institutions. Special attention should be given to the strengthening of the existing centres of excellence and other specialized technical institutions.
- ii) formulate effective national policies for education and training in science and technology for development, with emphasis on liberalization of technology flows, including advanced technologies and the promotion of indigenous technologies. To this end, African experts should be encouraged to remain in Africa and contribute to its developments.

(d) **Structural Transformation of African Economies**

- **Industrialization**

16. Industrialization is of great importance as we move into the 21st century. Industrial development is central to structural change and transformation of African economies, to the increase in incomes and employment, to the diversification of our exports and to the satisfaction of needs of the African peoples. African industrialization is still at a rudimentary stage, with outmoded processes and low technology input and high operating costs. In this connection, African governments are called upon to give priority attention to the following:

- i) the formulation of a programme for industrial restructuring, recognizing the changing world economy, in particular the implications of the Uruguay Round Agreements, globalization of production processes, and the need for Africa to be competitive, if it is to participate in the world economy;
- ii) the effective implementation of the Programme for the Second IDDA and strengthening sub-regional and regional institutions that are capable of supporting our efforts in the fields of engineering, technology, management and standardization, and related fields.
- iii) the contribution and support of UNIDO to Africa's industrialization will continue to be crucial to our industrial development. The current attempts to abolish UNIDO and UNCTAD are therefore of serious concern to our countries. We therefore call upon all our Member States to strongly resist such attempts.

17. Member States who have not done so should formulate policies and programmes for the development and strengthening of indigenous entrepreneurial capability, with special focus on the establishment of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises so as to develop the industrial middle class which is the engine for sustained development.

- Mineral Resources and Energy

18. In order to promote their industrial development, African countries should build and strengthen their capacity for exploration, development and utilization of the continent's abundant energy and mineral resources, and the formulation of effective cooperation policies in this regard. In particular, African countries are called upon to:

- i) promote the exports of high value-added mineral exports;
- ii) encourage private sector investment in the extraction and downstream processing of mineral resources;
- iii) encourage specialized training in mineral processing technology, mineralogy, and extractive metallurgy, foundry technology, material science and metal fabrication.

19. In Africa, a major hindrance to industrial development is the inadequacy of energy resources. The Secretary General of the OAU, in close cooperation with the Executive Secretary of the ECA and the President of ADB should therefore undertake, urgently, measures for establishing the African Energy Commission, stipulated in the Lagos Plan of Action, taking into account, inter alia, the ADB study on the **African Energy Programme**.

Transport and Communications

20. The importance of the transport and communications sector for Africa's development cannot be overemphasized. The African countries have in the past accorded priority to this sector in their development plans as a **sine qua non** for national social and economic development as well as for the integration of regional markets. However, despite the substantial progress made over the past 30 years of concerted efforts by African countries individually and collectively, Africa's transport and

communications capacity is still inadequate to support sustainable development. In view of the critical importance of this sector, especially with regard to regional integration, action must be taken immediately in the following areas for the implementation of the Programme of the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNTACDA II):

- (i) undertake reforms of the sector including granting autonomy to the operators and introducing competition in order to improve efficiency;
- (ii) encourage both private local and foreign investment, with particular attention to expanding services to the rural areas;
- iii) organize sub-regional consultations on coordination of airlines operations, as called for in the **Yamoussoukro Declaration on a New African Air Transport Policy (1988)**;
- iv) make all efforts to complete the missing sections in the Trans-Saharan Highway. To this end, every effort should be made to mobilize the required resources to promote closer co-operation and integration across the Sahara.
- (vi) establish as soon as possible the single bureau of the **Trans -African Highways Authorities** in order to integrate the African roads network;
- vii) establish linkages between our telecommunications systems and RASCOM as well as with the other systems, especially the ARABSAT, in order to participate effectively in the information superhighway.
- viii) African countries should sign and ratify the African Maritime Transport Charter so that African policies in all areas connected with International Maritime Transport and Ports are harmonized and co-ordinated as soon as possible, including the harmonization of maritime legislation and regulations in the Continent.

- Trade

21. The Uruguay Round Agreements will certainly worsen the situation with the erosion of the preferences that Africa's exports have been enjoying under the Lome Convention and the Generalised System of Preferences as well as the negative impact of net food imports. In fact, the impact of the Uruguay Round Agreements goes beyond trade to cover such issues as technology and investment flows. In recognition of Africa's special handicaps, in particular its commodity-based economy and inadequate capacities for participating and benefiting from the anticipated increases in global trade, technology and investment flows, we call on African governments to take the following actions:

- i) assess the full implications of the Uruguay Round Agreements, including policy, legal and administrative requirements for compliance, as well as the new market access conditions facing the exports individual African countries;
- ii) launch a programme to restructure Africa's export and expand intra-African trade in particular through trade liberalization programmes. Special attention should be given to the development of Tourism in view of its development potential. The RECs should play an increasingly important role in this matter;
- iii) support and effectively utilize AFREXIM BANK. In this connection, we call on the Member States and the Board of Directors of AFREXIM BANK to make it fully operational;
- iv) National banks should also establish innovative instruments to promote trade and development; they should also cooperate among themselves.

- Environment

22. Equally important are the environmental factors in African development. The rate of degradation of Africa's environment and loss of genetic resources and biodiversity threaten the very survival of the peoples of Africa. The rapid population

growth, increased poverty, displaced people as a result of conflicts, coupled with frequent droughts, have increased pressure for improved management of the environment. The African countries are called upon to give priority to the elaboration of the Protocol on Environment as called for in the **Abuja Treaty** and establish a national coordinating machinery to ensure integration of environmental issues into national development programmes, as defined in **Agenda 21** and the African Common Position in Environment and Development.

(e) Effective Mobilization and Efficient Utilization of Resources

23. Africa faces problems in effective mobilization of both **domestic and foreign resources** for its development. Domestic resource mobilization and its effective utilization have not been

carried out optimally. This resulted in a marked decline in both the volume and productivity of investment in our countries.

24. To reverse this situation, African governments should take following measures:

- i) create an enabling environment for domestic resource mobilization so as to encourage our people to have more confidence in the economies of our countries, including setting up saving systems built on the basis of population practices and capacities, especially for rural areas.
- ii) enact specific legislation to enhance the autonomous power of the central banks on monetary policy, including monitoring of credit creation and its allocation; and the supervision and regulation of financial institutions and instruments, so as to ensure and maintain a stable macroeconomic environment implying price, interest rate and exchange rate stability.

- iii) institute measures that increase public sector revenues through an effective tax collection and government securities; and, to rationalise government expenditures through practices of programmes-performance budgeting, and adequate auditing.
- iv) refrain from entering excessively into internal debts as a way of financing budget deficits, particularly those directed towards speculative and unproductive activities, so as to maintain fiscal stability while promoting economic growth.

25. To promote private domestic investment in Africa, the following measures should be taken:

- i) strengthen the country reform programmes, so as to encourage investments in productive sectors and harmonize these programmes and investment codes so as to facilitate the process of regional economic integration;
- ii) create an enabling environment that encourages human and physical investment and help retain human capital in African countries;
- iii) steps should be taken to strengthen capital markets institutions where they exist and to create new ones where they do not exist, in order to promote equity investment and achieve internal resource mobilization and utilization.
- (iv) In order to enhance the capacity of the financial sector to effectively channel the resources into productive investment, governments should intensify efforts to secure the full monetisation of African economies; to widen the instruments and services offered by financial institutions; and to ensure an effective link between the informal and formal sectors.

26. The foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to Africa account for only about 2 per cent in the total FDI inflows to developing countries. In order to reverse the trend and attract more FDI to Africa, measures should be instituted by African

governments to ensure a favourable investment climate including the following:

- i) provide clear procedures and rules regarding registration, protection and transferability of property rights in all their forms, and efficient enforcement of contractual obligations by the judicial system;
- ii) define clear incentives for investors in investment priorities in areas such as agro-food precessing, conservation, storage, improvement of the transport and communication infrastructure, better linkages within industry and between energy, minerals and industry, with strategic targeting of both external and domestic resources towards these priorities.

27. To counter the negative perceptions about the continent and the misinformation that investors receive on Africa, governments should endeavour to undertake an information campaign by highlighting the progress in economic reform and growth in our countries.

(f) Regional Economic cooperation and integration

28. Our review of the economic condition in Africa shows that African countries need to pool their resources and enhance co-operation, in order to achieve regional economic cooperation and integration in order to be competitive in world trade. In this respect, African countries should take full advantage of the opportunities of South/South co-operation and forge partnerships with the countries of the South. This process can be enhanced through a firm commitment to honour the obligations we enter into in our continental and regional co-operation institutions, implement the programmes we collectively adopt and provide them with the required moral, material and financial support they

deserve. Furthermore, the strengthening of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the intended building blocs of the African Economic Community (AEC) should be insured. In order to achieve this aim, African countries are urged to take the following steps:

- (i) To accelerate the process of rationalizing the institutional framework for economic integration at the regional level.
- (ii) For the RECs to be on a strong financial footing and secure their viability, their member States should establish as soon as possible for each one of them a self-financing mechanism, with the support of the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat and a self-enforcing mechanism to ensure prompt payment of assessed contributions.
- iii) In the same spirit, African countries are invited to direct financial assistance destined to economic integration activities in Africa, including Regional Fund under Lome Convention to furthering relevant regional programmes and projects and to pay special attention to regional integration for mutual benefit in human and natural resources development as well as in the area of infrastructure, particularly, transport and communications, information, electricity grids and hydaulic power generating stations.
- (iv) For the purpose of ensuring a proper coordination of national sectoral policies and effective follow-up, implementation and monitoring of regional and continental decisions, African States which have not yet done so should set up at the national level a machinery in charge of all questions related to economic integration.
- (v) The special circumstances of the African small island countries should be given due recognition in Africa's integration efforts.

- (vi) In order to operationalize the Abuja Treaty as soon as possible, member States should adopt and ratify the priority protocols by the end of 1997, at the latest, and to take necessary measures at the national level, including integrating the protocols into their legislations, to make these protocols applicable by competent authorities.
- (vii) Member States should popularize the Abuja Treaty and all relevant documents in order to make African populations the genuine actors in the process and facilitate cross-border dialogue towards the attainment of pan-Africanist ideals. To this end, they must engage all media, both public and private, in their endeavours to increase awareness of the larger public vis-a-vis the aims, mechanisms and requirements of economic integration. To facilitate the efforts of Member States, the OAU is requested to expeditiously finalise and distribute to Member States a popular version of the Abuja Treaty.

29. In order to set up the much needed regional productive capacities, the member States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are urged to:

- i) speed up African integration through the implementation of common projects that will form an integrated development pattern leading to sustained economic growth, based on common interests and mutual benefits.
- ii) formulate lists of common projects that can attract international, governmental and private investments. The projects and programmes to be promoted by the Regional Economic Communities should be under the co-ordination of the OAU Secretary-General.

- iii) In this regard the African Development Bank is urged to play a leading role in financing regional studies, programmes and projects.

III. What we require from our development partners

(a) Understanding, appreciation and support of Africa's development efforts.

30. A new international system is evolving. This development offers a unique opportunity for the international community to agree on a set of principles governing international relations. On our part, we firmly believe that some of the most important principles include the democratization of the international system, the right of our countries to decide on their own priorities and programmes, respect for and implementation of international commitments. Member States of the United Nations should refrain from any unilateral measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that create obstacles to trade relations among States. These principles should be incorporated in the UN Secretary General's **Agenda for Development**.

31. Development aid that had been provided had not always been used for the priority programmes of countries assisted. What is more, we are witnessing an increasingly marked trend of rivalry between African governments and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). Sometimes the governments were even robbed of their responsibilities. The NGOs should play a supportive role by complementing government efforts but, given their fragility and lack of requisite resources, these organizations cannot assume the responsibility for the development of the continent. There is therefore an urgent need for our development partners to significantly increase resource in-flows to African countries especially through Official Development Assistance (ODA) and foreign direct investment.

32. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) has not received all the expected support from the international community, especially in the areas of external debt and resource flows. Specifically, the commitment to establish a Diversification Fund for African Commodities has not yet materialized. Also, the UNECA should be strengthened to fully play its coordinating role in the mobilization of the UN System for the implementation of UN-NADAF.

(b) Trade and Development

33. The recently concluded Uruguay Round of negotiations and the establishment of the World Trade Organization constitute a new development in world trade relations, with serious implications to Africa. We are seriously concerned about the potential impact of the Agreements on Africa. Our preliminary assessment of the impact of this development is that Africa will stand to lose heavily because of the stringent conditionalities imposed by the Agreements and which African countries will not be able to meet. There is a need to ensure that transparency in the liberalized world market, devoid of conditionalities and other non-tariff barriers, is applied universally and in a sustainable manner. To mitigate the negative impact of the Uruguay Round Agreements on Africa's development, we appeal to our development partners to discuss with us those aspects of the Agreements which are detrimental to the development of our countries. In this regard, the outcomes of the international conference on the implications of the Uruguay Round Agreements on Africa, held in Tunis, Tunisia on 27 October 1994, could serve as a framework for action. Meanwhile in implementing the provisions of the Final Act off-setting measures must be adopted to obviate likely adverse effects that will arise from the erosion of special preferences currently enjoyed by African countries.

34. We call upon the International Community to ensure that the UN Agenda for Development addresses the urgent development needs of Africa as one of the most seriously affected continents by the

present international economic environment and support the diversification programmes in Africa and the establishment of the Commodity Diversification Fund.

(c) Africa's external debt

35. Africa's external debt stock and its rapid growth are a deterrent to increased non-debt generating resource flows. It diverts the resources generated by African economies already negatively affected by the continuous deterioration of terms of trade. In spite of the efforts made by African States, by adopting structural reforms and promoting alternative programmes, with the assistance of multi-lateral and bilateral financial institutions, and in spite of the various initiatives (Toronto, Brady, France and USA initiatives etc.) the debt problem still remains one of the main constraints in the renewal with economic growth.

36. Africa's external debt affect negatively, in the long run, not only the African economic capacity to meet the basic needs of the African population, but also its capacity to contribute significantly to the revival of world growth, by increasing the African economic capacities to absorb more goods and services from outside, and by reversing the declining trends of transfers to Africa.

37. The need to reverse the declining trends of transfers to Africa has been stressed. Even in African countries where some progress has been registered in 1994, increased inflow of resources are still required to generate sustainable development. For this to happen, coordinated action on debt and flows from multilateral financing institutions should take place, with particular emphasis on the provision of concessional resources, through the International Development Association (IDA), African Development Fund (ADF) and the European Development Fund (EDF), which are the three major multilateral windows through which concessional resources are channelled to Africa. Furthermore, the rules of international relations should be observed, and there should be no

attempt to destabilise the economies of African countries by imposing embargoes and economic blockades, freezing assets, preventing them from obtaining technology and starving them for political reasons.

38. For economic reforms to succeed in Africa, all creditors including multilateral institutions should adopt enhanced measures which should go beyond debt re-scheduling. International commitment to Africa's recovery can be shown by reducing the debt burden to a point where it ceases to inhibit investing in Africa. In this regard, while subscribing to the recent JAKARTA NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT'S DECLARATION ON DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT: SHARING OF EXPERIENCE. Africa calls on its bilateral and multilateral creditors including the former Soviet Union countries to enter into a dialogue in order to coordinate their efforts for identifying ways and means by which they could reduce the continent's debt burden, particularly for the current debt servicing levels. Specifically, African governments call on the G7 through the Paris Club to extend additional relief beyond the Naples Terms particularly for severely-indebted low income countries. Further, we call on G7 to consider innovative ways to deal with multilateral debt along the lines proposed by the UK regarding the sale of IMF gold and to ensure that multilateral debt relief is not achieved at the expense of official grant financing. Within this context, urgent support and assistance from International Development Agencies and Donor Countries to war and natural disaster affected countries are particularly needed to generally move them from a state of reliance on relief and humanitarian assistance to sustainable development.

IV. Follow-up Mechanism

39. The follow-up and implementation mechanism to these recommendations lies largely with the member states at the national, sub-regional, regional and continental levels. At the national level, governments should institute measures for increased national dialogue in order to reach broad consensus on development objectives and how to reach the goals sought. The following specific measures are proposed:

- (a) The Cairo Agenda for Action should be tabled in the national cabinets of African governments, in order to involve the entire government machinery in the implementation of the Agenda;
- (b) The Agenda should also be tabled by the government in national parliaments for debate in order to allow parliamentarians to deliberate on the development issues contained in the Agenda, thereby giving the Agenda wide publicity and national attention;
- (c) The governments should involve various groups in organizing national and regional seminars and workshops on the Cairo Agenda, with participants drawn from all segments of society: organized private sector groups, especially the African Chambers of Commerce, the African Business Round Table, employers and workers organizations, political and professional organizations, women groups, youth, NGOs, teachers, university professors, etc.

40. At the regional level, the Cairo Agenda for Action should be submitted to the RECs and their respective authorities for implementation.

41. At the continental level, we request the OAU Secretary General to work together with the ECA Executive Secretary and the President of the ADB, within the framework of the Joint Secretariat, to monitor and report regularly to the Council on the implementation of these decisions. Specifically, the Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) and the Specialized Technical Committees established under the Abuja Treaty should monitor the implementation of these matters.

42. Political will and determination of the Member States will be required to effectively tackle and solve the economic and social problems facing our continent. Close personal attention of Heads of State and Government of the OAU is indispensable in the solution of these problems. ~~Consequently, we recommend for the~~

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~~solution of these problems.~~ Consequently, we recommend for the approval of the Summit the establishment of a Ministerial Standing Committee of the member States. The composition of the Committee, its terms of reference and the modalities for its operation will be decided upon after full consultation with all Member States.