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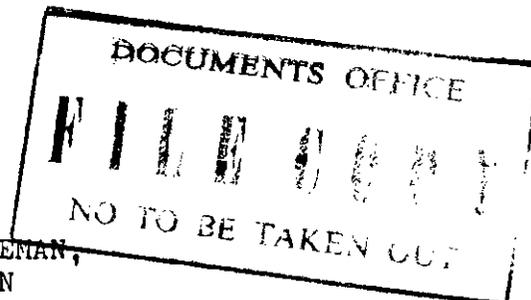
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
Seventh session  
Nairobi, 9 - 23 February 1965  
Item 5 of the agenda

STATEMENT MADE BY MR. ONWONA-AGYEMAN,  
LEADER OF THE GHANA DELEGATION  
TO THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA



Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is happy to express its profound gratitude to His Excellency President Jomo Kenyatta and the Government and people of Kenya for the hospitality which has been lavished on us since our arrival in Nairobi. This is a further testimony of the sincere interest which President Kenyatta and his Government take in the aims and objectives of the ECA and we are most appreciative.

My delegation's thanks go to President Kenyatta again for the lucid and inspiring address he delivered at the opening of the session. We fully share the President's sentiments on the important role which the ECA should play in the rapid economic development of the African continent.

We warmly welcome Malawi and Zambia to full membership of the Commission. Their achievement of independence signifies yet another milestone in the complete de-colonization of our dear continent. It is our earnest hope that the time will not be long when all countries in Africa will be free and participate in the work of the Commission as full members.

Mr. Chairman, since our last meeting the Government of Ghana has launched its Seven-Year Development Plan. This Plan provides the blueprint for the future progress and development of Ghana as a nation.

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It is a programme of social and economic development based on the use of science and technology to revolutionise our agriculture and industry. It is designed to provide the basis not only of our national progress and prosperity, but also of our ability to contribute to the advancement of the African continent.

A major feature of this Plan is the Volta River Project. This involves an investment of seventy million pounds in a hydro-electric project, over fifty-eight million pounds in an aluminium smelter and a projected seven million pounds in ancillary development. My delegation is happy to say that the construction of the dam involved in the hydro-electric project was completed last Monday. As the distinguished delegate from Togo said yesterday negotiations are in progress between Ghana and Togo so that our two countries can derive the maximum benefit from the Project. Discussions have also been held with the Ivory Coast Government and it is hoped to extend this co-operation to other neighbouring sister countries.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation has read with interest the statement by the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission since our last session (Document E/CN.14/294). Even though much remains to be done, it is gratifying to note that the Commission is making steady progress. From a relatively modest beginning, consisting in the bare collection of facts, the Commission has now brought into being two institutions of vital interest to the rapid economic development of the continent --namely the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, and the African Development Bank. We have noted with deep interest the Executive Secretary's statement that the establishment of these two institutions is only the beginning of a series of operational activities which the Commission feels itself obliged to undertake.

Mr. Chairman, there is consensus among us that if African economic development should proceed at a rate commensurate with our aspirations, then our vital economic plans should be drawn up and executed on a basis transcending individual national boundaries. Practical work has in fact already started in economic co-ordination on a sub-regional basis. All along Ghana has supported these efforts. It is quite clear nevertheless that the sub-regional frame-work should be devised with great caution if our efforts are not in the long run to hamper our objective of African unity. Although for a varying number of projects the most effective way at this stage is to work within the frame work of sub-regional institutions, we must bear in mind constantly that there are other projects which would require for their proper implementation more countries than constitute a sub-region. In particular the ancillary arrangements in the field of trade, payments and transport, for example, have to be made in such a way as not to isolate one sub-region of Africa from the other. Mr. Chairman, there is a dangerous tendency in certain quarters to think that the integration of a number of African economies on a sub-regional basis will solve the problem of economic balkanisation. It is the view of my delegation that in this age of giant economies, it is necessary to pool together the resources and the markets of all the 250 million people of African in order to build an economy which is fully viable in modern terms. We must seek for Africa, the same frame-work that has given the United States, the Soviet Union and the European continent the great economic power which they now wield.

The necessity of planning on a Pan-African basis in order to achieve the aspirations of the African peoples is especially clear in the fields of transport and communications. If Africa is going to make any headway in its economic, social or even political life then there must be an adequate transport and communications system linking all Africa and based on the same standards and procedures. We note that the secretariat has already taken certain initiatives in the field of transport and communications. It is the view of my delegation that

this session should examine the matter further and take decisions which could bring us nearer the point of concrete action in the development of a Pan-African transport and telecommunications. In this connexion my delegation, in association with other delegations, hopes at the appropriate time to put forward some concrete proposals.

Mr. Chairman, this is Africa's finest hour. Our destiny has been placed in our own hands; it is no longer in the hands of others. We have the will and the means to shape this destiny in accordance with our true interests and those of future generations. Our true interest lies in continental co-operation. Already we have set up an institution, the Organization of African unity, to stimulate this cooperation. My Government is convinced that there is an urgent need to strengthen this Organization by the establishment of a Continental Union Government capable of giving political direction to our common endeavours. It is the earnest hope of my Government that sooner or later, or rather sooner than later, this Union Government will be established. While we thus move towards the establishment of a Continental Government, the work of the ECA, as the economic agency for Africa, should be geared more and more to the promotion of development on a continental basis.

May I conclude, Mr. Chairman, by congratulating you on your election to preside over the Seventh session of the ECA and to wish you all success.

Thank you.

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