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ECA HOSTS NINTH CARTOGRAPHIC CONFERENCE

Some 30 African Member States of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), national institutions from the United States of America, Canada, France, India, Poland, Germany, and the United Kingdom and several observers from international, regional organizations are to begin a four-day meeting next Monday in the United Nations Conference Centre, on the Ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference on Africa. Participants include managers and academicians from noted African and non-African centres.

Its primary objective is to provide a regional forum where government officials, planners, scientists and experts, the public and private sectors from Africa and abroad could meet to enhance the role of surveying, mapping and remote sensing in contributing to Africa's sustainable development.

In its eighth meeting in February 1993, the Conference adopted three resolutions: the role of cartography, remote sensing and geographic information systems in sustainable development; data acquisition in Africa; and the international hydrogeological mapping programme for Africa and a study on cartography for Africa.

Besides following up on those the Ninth Conference will hear reports made by member countries in the development of national capabilities since its last meeting while international, regional and sub-regional organizations expatiate on achievements and current programmes in geo-information that is relevant to Africa.

Under the item data acquisition and standardization, leading experts are to present papers that focus on new technological advances in cartography, remote sensing and geographic data-bases, their role and impact on socio-economic development.

Data manipulation to satisfy the application required by different sectors of development in support of the planning of programmes will feature in the conference discussions. And so will regional mapping issues.

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The ECA Secretariat will present three reports in this connection: Status of the Cartographic Coverage and Programmes in Africa, an Assessment of Remote Sensing Programmes in Africa and their contribution to the goals of Agenda 21; and Cartography for Development.

To round up its substantive discourse the conference will formulate policies and strategies to be adopted by official delegates. These will then be presented to the ECA Conference of Ministers who will provide a framework within which institutions in Member States will be able to fill their geographical and information gaps as recommended by Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio in 1992.
