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UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

REPORT OF THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Addis Ababa, 31 May - 2 June 1976)

Opening and duration of the session

1. The fourteenth session of the Executive Committee was opened by Mr. Layachi Yaker, Minister of Commerce of Algeria, first Vice-Chairman of the third session of the Conference of Ministers, in the absence of Mr. Mwai Kibaki (Kenya), Chairman of the Conference of Ministers and current Chairman of the Executive Committee, who was unable to attend.
2. The session took place at Addis Ababa from 31 May to 2 June 1976, under the chairmanship of Mr. Layachi Yaker, Minister of Commerce of Algeria.

Attendance

3. The session was attended by representatives of the following States members of the Committee: Algeria, Burundi, Egypt, Gabon, the Gambia, the Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Senegal, the Sudan, the United Republic of Cameroon, Zaire and Zambia.
4. Also attending the session were observers from Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, the Libyan Arab Republic, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The following United Nations bodies were represented: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations Sahelian Office (UNSO). Observers from the following specialized agencies were also present: International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). An observer was present from the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Election of officers

5. The Committee elected Mr. Layachi Yaker, Minister of Commerce of Algeria as its Chairman; Mrs. L.A.W. Monze, Minister of State for Economic and Technical Co-operation of Zambia, as first Vice-Chairman, Mr. L.R. Devienne, Minister of Fuel, Power and Energy of Mauritius as Second Vice-Chairman and Mr. Félix Magenge, the Ambassador of Burundi in Ethiopia as Rapporteur.

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

6. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of Officers
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
4. Medium-term work programme for 1976-1981
5. Survey of economic and social conditions in Africa, 1975
6. Progress report on the establishment of a regional data bank with special reference to country participation
7. Meeting of the Economic and Social Council (Abidjan, 1-8 July 1976)
8. Any other business
9. Date of the fifteenth session of the Executive Committee
10. Adoption of the report.

Medium-term work programme for 1976-1981 (agenda item 4)

General

7. According to the circulated statement of the Executive Secretary, the introduction to the document, set out in annex 1, sought to establish the links between the work programme and the Revised Framework of Principles.

8. In stating some of these links, he used the work programme in industry - section 9.332 - as an example. This concentrated on multinational basic and strategic industries such as those to which reference was made in the revised framework of principles and in the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the Second General Conference of UNIDO in March 1975. The list was in some respects open-ended, that is, it was subject to amendment from time to time. The raw materials requirements for those industries would be the object of particular attention by the Natural Resources Division, under section 9.464. Within that programme (project 9.521.03 and, under industry, project 9.332.03), it was hoped also to investigate some of the technological components of these basic industries including the conditions, terms and costs of transfer through licensing and other arrangements, while provision was made under project 9.442.27 for a closer look at their manpower requirements and supply problems. As was to be expected, a good deal of institution building would be involved, and he drew attention first to project 9.332.26, which would examine the design of and arrangements for the principal instruments required for multinational industries - African multinational corporations, which would be backed by the proposed multinational mining and industrial development banks - (project 9.513.27). Secondly, he drew attention to section 9.333 on other institutions whose establishment had been agreed upon at the 1975 Nairobi Conference of Ministers of Industry. The link between basic and strategic industries, major national industries and small-scale industries was provided for in, among others, project 9.334.31. The other links were too numerous to mention.

9. As regards rural development, the proposed activities of the secretariat had been presented as an 'area programme' in addendum 1. The same had been done for the least developed countries. Most of the area programme projects were, of course, assembled from sectoral programmes.

10. Under development planning appeared the secretariat's broadened attitude towards the unified approach, its shift of attention to a strategic factor both for increasing self-reliance and for self-sustaining acceleration and diversification, namely African entrepreneurial resources. This, he stated, should be taken together with growing interest in the development of national and multinational business consultancy services (projects 9.441.04, 9.441.05 and 9.441.28). Another extension of interest under this programme covered problems of co-ordinating the public and private sectors. Greater emphasis was also placed on regional (i.e., sub-national) planning which, together with ECA's programme on HABITAT, were basic for rural development and for policies of controlled urbanization (project 9.531.29).

11. In trade the secretariat had endeavoured to include some of the most far-reaching recommendations of the Manila Conference and the Georgetown meetings, for example projects 9.341.02 on joint pooling of key imports, 9.341.03 on multinational import and export enterprises, 9.341.29 and 9.341.30 on African trade with other developing regions and with the socialist countries. The programme on intra-African trade was greatly strengthened, and among other items sought to fill a gap in the intra-African trade mechanism: commodity exchanges (projects 9.342.07 and 9.342.08) and national procurement and supplies policies (project 9.342.09). The institutional and training requirements of that subject were dealt with in project 9.505.31.

12. This, he said, was only a sample of what he considered the most promising, exciting and innovative elements in ECA's revised work programme.

13. Finally, the Executive Secretary added that the secretariat had considered that the advice of the Committee could be implemented. The format of the Work Programme, he said, was universal in the United Nations system. Emphasis was placed on studies because they were a means to an end - leading to specific projects. Furthermore, the Work Programme took into account the interdisciplinary nature of the secretariat, so that the work of each division was related to that of the others. If only the secretariat had adequate resources, he said, some aspirations of the region would be accomplished.

14. Answering a procedural question as to whether the formulation of the work programme of ECA was not the task of the Technical Committee of Experts rather than that of the Executive Committee, and whether the secretariat had in fact indicated the magnitude of the financial resources required to implement the work programme, the Executive Secretary explained that under the rules of procedure of the Conference of Ministers the Technical Committee of Experts met once every two years three or four months before the Conference of Ministers. In between were the meetings of the Executive Committee. The secretariat worked under a tight programme governed by a time-table of United Nations Headquarters, in which ECA's work programme had to be sent to the Economic and Social Council in July. It was his view, therefore, that on the basis of the discussions by the Executive Committee of the revised framework of principles for the establishment of a new international economic order in Africa, in which all member States had been invited to participate last February, the Executive Committee which was a ministerial committee, was perhaps in the best position to consider the work programme and act on behalf of the Conference of Ministers if the time-table was to be met.

15. With regard to resource requirements for the implementation of the work programme, the Executive Secretary explained that a week earlier the secretariat had had the visit of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, to which a rough estimate of the additional resource requirements for the rest of the current biennium (1976-1977) had been submitted. He pointed out that there were three types of resources on which the secretariat depended for work programme implementation. These were (a) the United Nations regular budget; (b) bilateral extra-budgetary resources; and (c) resources from member Governments. He gave the example of the Mineral Development Institute for the Eastern African subregion, whose actual cost it would be up to the countries of the subregion to determine and finance. It was this type of project which made it difficult for the secretariat to indicate cost amounts against each project. Nevertheless, he said, he intended that resource implications for project implementation would be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

16. The Chairman proposed that the discussion of the work programme should proceed serially as provided in document E/CN.14/TECO/31 Rev.1, taking into account the introduction provided in E/CN.14/TECO/31 Rev.1 (Pref) as well as the addendum in E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1/Add.1. It was so agreed.

Agriculture

17. Introducing the work programme in agriculture, the secretariat representative drew the attention of the Committee to the five major work programme components in document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1, namely: project 9.211, agricultural development policy, planning and programming; project 9.212, supply of agricultural inputs; project 9.213, promotion of integrated rural development and improvement of agricultural institutions and services; project 9.214, expansion of food production; and project 9.215, improvement of food availability and agricultural marketing institutions, services and facilities.

18. It was explained that the work programme of the Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division fell mainly in the areas of providing technical advisory services, on request, and studies. Another aspect of the work of the Division entailed meetings and particular attention was drawn to project 9.215.26 on subregional consultations on the possibility of increasing food availability through waste reduction and marketing improvement. A meeting was scheduled to take place at Monrovia, Liberia in October 1976 on that subject.

19. In the discussion which followed, the representative of FAO stated that his organization's interest in the work programme of ECA was evidenced by the creation of a Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division. Both Organizations, he said, sought to improve agricultural development in the region. They had collaborated, for example, in the consideration of policies and strategies to combat the scourge of poverty, and at the biennial FAO regional conferences the Executive Secretary of ECA was invited as one of the principal speakers, particularly in the field of agriculture. The next FAO regional conference was scheduled to be held in Freetown, Sierra Leone from 2 to 12 November 1976, and the ECA secretariat has been invited to participate.

20. The Director-General of FAO was doing all he could to ensure that the priorities of FAO in agricultural development were reoriented to tackle the problems of agriculture in the African region. The Director-General had in fact asked the FAO Conference to be allowed six months to examine and propose plans for the implementation of the programme. The FAO areas of priority were: (a) establishment of a technical co-operation

programme under its regular programme in order to give FAO an opportunity to deal with problems emanating from the countries themselves; (b) concern with the problem of representation at country level, in which the decentralization proposed by the Director-General would permit analysis of information and thus enable FAO to respond quickly instead of having to go through second or third parties; (c) strengthening of FAO so as to increase assistance to member countries, for example in cases of areas hit by such catastrophes as drought and floods; (d) transfer of technology, not necessarily from the advanced countries, but from research stations to farmers. Hence FAO's emphasis on education and training of farmers, both of which it intended to intensify.

21. The representative of FAO also explained that his organization, with the other agencies in the United Nations system, recognized the role of women in agriculture, and therefore that their training should be intensified. He observed that food production was declining rapidly but not proportionately with that of other crops. The technical base was narrow, he said, but investment for food production was also low. Referring to the International Fund for Agricultural Development, he said that in order to ensure that it served agriculture effectively FAO would give technical and professional leadership in agricultural sector analysis, project preparation and analysis and in the preparation and analysis of information.

22. In the discussions, the Committee pointed out that the work programme in agriculture included various activities which merited praise, especially those dealing with the supply of inputs, and the promotion of integration of agricultural activities among groups of countries. Nevertheless, there was insufficient attention paid to soil conservation or desertification questions, which had been dealt with adequately in other forums, and greater attention to them in future was urged. Furthermore, the question of storage, which the Committee had considered previously, needed proper attention, as well as giving assistance to agricultural co-operatives, especially in newly independent States. To the former observation, however, the secretariat drew the attention of the Committee on project 9.212.04, dealing with studies on measures to combat desertification and soil erosion in co-operation with the ECA Environment Unit and the United Nations Sahelian Office.

23. Although it was recognized that fisheries were receiving due attention elsewhere, a desire was expressed to see greater interest in the subject on the part of ECA.

24. There were observations on the complete lack of reference to river basins in agriculture, or to water supplies. The secretariat drew attention to addendum 1 to document E/CN.14/TECO/31 Rev.1, whose chapters dealt with water resources. Furthermore, as regards the question of river basins, reference was made by the secretariat to project 9.212 on the supply of agricultural inputs, whose second objective was to promote the provision and efficient utilization of water (including that of river basins) for crop and livestock production in arid and semi-arid regions, and to project 9.212.01(vi) on the promotion of improved methods of water management in irrigation schemes.

25. The question of drought, which was the cause of famine for long periods in some countries, came up for discussion, including the eradication of rodents, which destroyed crops, and a desire was expressed to highlight them in the agriculture work programme, preferably by including a project on assistance to drought-stricken areas. In that connexion, the secretariat drew attention to project 9.214.01(iii) on the implementation of programmes to combat drought.

26. On the question of whether project 9.213.03 on integration of livestock into the farming system was limited to countries where livestock was predominant, the secretariat explained that the coverage was unlimited. As to lack of a distinct reference to animal health in the programme, the secretariat stated that, although it did not deal with technical matters in livestock, the question of animal health was actually taken care of in project 9.214.02 on analysis of the constraints to, and potential for, the expansion of food production, including livestock and animal production, etc.

27. Reference was also made to the lack of mention of frit and stomoxys flies in project 9.214.05 on studies on the eradication of tse-tse fly and trypanosomiasis, and a proposal was made that they be included in the programme.

28. As regards the involvement of youth and women in agriculture, including training activities, which were felt wanting in the work programme in agriculture, the secretariat said that their roles had not been neglected. In fact, aspects relating to youth would be dealt with under project 9.211 on agricultural policy and planning. Moreover, ECA had a Social Development Division which tackled questions concerning women and youth. Allied with the training of youth and women also was consideration of available farm tools and implements. It was further explained that when the secretariat talked of farmers' associations that also included women and youth.

29. It was stated that hitherto neglected research on crops should be encouraged, as experience elsewhere had shown that crops which did not grow before could now grow easily. The dissemination of such research on a wide scale among African countries was also essential.

30. Referring to the work of his organization, the representative of the United Nations Sahelian Office (UNSO) stated that assistance was given to the countries of the drought-stricken Sudano-Sahelian zone in their efforts to achieve recovery and revival in the medium and long term in accordance with resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Within the framework of the work programme in agriculture, he informed the Committee of some special aspects of UNSO activities, including: integrated technical assistance, assistance given to national leaders in planning of agricultural policy, inclusion of projects relating to the production of fertilizers and pesticides on the level of the Sahelian subregion, the making of agricultural implements and machinery and the production of pumps and wind-mills and other equipment for irrigation. The suggestions of UNSO also covered the development of a regional integrated improved seeds programme, increasing the storage capacity for cereals and intensifying the fight against crop pests and strengthening plant and pasture development and protection systems. He also stressed the importance of the fight against soil erosion and desertification.

31. Overall, the Committee agreed that African agriculture was the key to development. There was need to diversify, however, if countries were to meet their needs and thus bring radical changes in the rural population reflected at the international level. The World Food Conference in Rome, it was recalled, had decided to establish an Agricultural Development Fund with \$400 million as a start, and ECA was urged to keep close watch on the uses to which the fund was put and how it could be used in the African regional projects.

Development planning, projections and policies

32. The secretariat introduced the programme entitled development planning, projections and policies as one which cut across all sectors and regions because ECA had to keep abreast with development in other areas with regard to the establishment of a new international economic order. The main components of that programme were five, namely: project 9.241 on development trends, requirements and possibilities; that project in fact constituted the Annual Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa (Parts I and II); project 9.242 on socio-economic research, planning and projections; that project involved comparative socio-economic research on certain development problems in the region, including examination of the extent and possibilities of the practical application of the unified approach to development analysis and planning in Africa. Other aspects included in the main programme component were: evaluation of African entrepreneurial responses, co-ordination of public and private sector development activities, regional and sectoral planning and projections; project 9.243 on liaison with universities, research institutions and other institutions involved in research on socio-economic problems in Africa; project 9.244 on the least developed and land-locked African countries; and project 9.245 on fiscal, monetary and financial issues at the national level; the last project involved mostly the mobilization of national resources and assistance to member countries in building monetary and financial institutions.

33. Giving support to the programme, the Committee noted the wide range of important projects relevant to the problems of African countries. Nevertheless, whereas the concept of regional planning was a wide one, the participants expressed the desire to see as a part of regional planning studies on migration waves and on how to spread activities of development in the rural areas, thus creating employment opportunities for the masses.

34. As regards the programme of action for the least developed countries, as defined in various General Assembly resolutions, the Committee felt that there was a need for certain specialized studies on the flow of technical and capital resources to the least developed countries on soft terms. Emphasis on increased multinational technical assistance to them was equally important, as were the inflow of resources to improve their infrastructure; it was also important to carry out studies on the possibilities of establishing a fund to help reduce the transport costs of the least developed countries. The secretariat concurred, and drew attention to a special programme in addendum 1 to E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1.

35. ECA was urged to take an interest in the development plans of individual member States, and it was asked whether there were actual ways in which ECA could help member States besides the passing reference to providing assistance in the field of development planning [see project 9.242.01(i)]. The secretariat replied that ECA in fact took development plans of individual member countries into full account in its studies on development planning and in its projections.

36. It was proposed that the words "and land-locked" should be inserted between "least developed" and "African countries" so that the phrase would read "least developed and land-locked African countries". The secretariat undertook to do so.

37. On the question of whether reference to evaluation, interest rates, structures and their effectiveness in mobilizing financial resources for development in project 9.245.09 actually included a study of the relationship between Governments and parastatal organizations, the secretariat agreed that it did, adding that Treasuries advanced substantial funds to the latter bodies at low interest rates, which falsified the cost structure.

38. The Committee was convinced that ECA in collaboration with interested countries, regional institutions and United Nations bodies should pay attention to the least developed and land-locked African countries in applying the General Assembly resolutions on those countries.

39. The question of the data required in planning came up, but it was pointed out that the matter would be taken up with agenda item 6, dealing with a progress report on the establishment of a regional data bank with special reference to country participation.

Promotion of economic co-operation and integration

40. Introducing the work programme on promotion of economic co-operation and integration, the secretariat explained that a large part of the subject matter applied to other divisions of the secretariat, for example the industry division in section 9.332 dealing with multinational co-operation in the development of basic or strategic industries. There were a number of studies of industrial possibilities arising from multinational procurement, long-term bulk purchasing arrangements and subcontracting. In trade the programme took into account the establishment of multinational import and export enterprises, the creation and strengthening of multinational associations and institutions oriented towards the promotion of intra-African trade, as well as the establishment of export credit insurance and export credit financing schemes.

41. In the field of energy, the effort was to encourage multinational co-operation in the exploration, systematic planning and optimum development of energy sources and energy distribution, while in the minerals field multinational co-operation was directed towards the development of basic and strategic industries based on mineral resources (section 9.464).

42. It was also explained that the programme on economic co-operation on page 17 of document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1 represented only the implementation of that concept and the improvement of the existing machinery for co-operation. The need to improve personnel training was alluded to, and also the biennial review mentioned in project 9.244.02, in which the secretariat intended to present a picture of what had been achieved in economic co-operation in the fields of agriculture, industry, trade, natural resources, etc. It was, however, stressed that economic co-operation was not solely a matter between governments. There was a need to organize distribution across national boundaries through agents of production, and in this the programme also sought to promote progress, for example through chambers of commerce. This was necessary as of 47 independent African States only two had populations of over 30 million, whereas 26 had populations of under 5 million.

43. In the discussions on economic co-operation, the Committee supported the programme on the subject, stressing that economic co-operation was indispensable since there were 47 independent African units. Economic integration had not yielded much, and yet Africa badly needed it. Political independence was not enough by itself and economic co-operation should be the next step.

44. The Committee looked forward to the studies which were to be undertaken in the field of international roads and transport. One member of the Committee expressed his government's keen interest in the Lagos- Nouakchott Highway and its extension towards the Mediterranean Sea (Nouakchott-Rabat). The Committee further noted the focus on other infrastructures, such as telecommunications, and urged that shipping should also be given adequate attention within ECA. Furthermore, the secretariat was requested to stress economic co-operation in agriculture as in other areas.

45. ECA was also urged to try to assist member countries to obtain financial resources with which to implement multinational projects, because, though the principle of co-operation was an accepted fact, the means of implementing it were lacking. In that connexion the secretariat cited the Zambian example of creating a special ministry to deal with technical and economic co-operation matters, and added that the secretariat would continue to ask member States to take a close interest in such matters, since only a few of them were attaching sufficient importance to them.

46. The example of the UNDATs was cited to illustrate where economic co-operation was beginning to take place, although there was still a need for the political will and the right kind of personnel if the UNDATs were to succeed in their task. In that connexion the secretariat pointed out that in the programme on economic co-operation it had focused on specific programmes, and had constantly tried to avoid a one-dimensional approach to economic co-operation. As to the future of the UNDATs, there was a mission under way to the different subregions in Africa to study the subject, and its conclusions would be examined at the next meeting of the Committee.

Education and training

47. The secretariat introduced the programme in education and training, which contained four components, namely: project 9.261, policies and planning for education and training systems; project 9.262, institution building and development of training facilities; project 9.263, adaptation of professional training and qualifications to conditions and needs of African States; and project 9.264, fellowship programme. It was pointed out that training components were also to be found in all the programmes of the secretariat, as in the programmes of other organizations of the United Nations family. It was also stressed that studies in the education and training programme were given a second rating. They were meant merely to provide back-stopping to other projects. The main concern of the programme was the ways and means of training Africans.

48. In the discussions which ensued it was recognized that education and training played a vital role in the social and economic development of individual countries. Thus the real test of development lay in the availability of qualified manpower and vocational training meeting the requirements for development. It was therefore urged that studies on the improvement of high-level manpower requirements and the development of vocational training should be included in the ECA work programme. The secretariat agreed that quality education was essential, and there was provision for that in the programme.

49. As regards the fellowship programme, a desire was expressed that ECA should consider granting assistance to nationals to enable them to study within their own countries. The secretariat agreed with this, adding that that was the reason why ECA advocated that Africa should contribute some resources to ECA, in the same way that some developed countries did.

50. With regard to non-formal education, referred to in project 9.261.02, it was asked what ECA's role was in traditional education, and ECA was urged not to lose sight of pre-school education in the programme. However, it was explained that non-formal and traditional education were within the competence not of the Public Administration, Management and Manpower Division, but of the Human Resources Development Division. The former dealt with working young people and adults.

51. No distinction was made between children coming from secondary school and others in over-all economic development, and pre-school education for children with working mothers deserved consideration.

52. The representative of UNESCO recalled the Conference of African Ministers of Education, held in Lagos in February 1976, which had been a landmark in that it had taken stock of progress in education since the Addis Ababa meeting in 1961, and formulated recommendations on methods in training and technical co-operation between developing countries. However, addressing himself to the work programme in education and training, he wondered whether project assistance to countries and territories was not too vague, inasmuch as Africans were capable of establishing their own educational structures and strategies. He suggested that efforts should be made to give priority to mass education and basic education using modern technology in accordance with the Lagos recommendations.

53. In response to the above, the secretariat drew attention to specific areas of the work programme where assistance would always be given on request. Although countries were getting more mature, they would probably still benefit from the experience of the other African countries. As to the methodology and techniques of training, there was a project in section 9.262 dealing with the subject.

Human settlements

54. Introducing a work programme in human settlements, the secretariat referred to the four key programmes and their contents. They were: project 9.291, policies and programme for housing, building, physical planning and town planning; project 9.292, improving housing finance mechanisms and increasing the flow of capital to housing; project 9.293, promoting the efficient utilization of resources for housing and integrated rural development; project 9.294, building research and standardization. It was explained in the work of the section on the subject, collaboration was maintained with UNEP, the United Nations Centre for Housing, Building and Planning (New York) and with UNDP. The Committee was also informed that a publication entitled "Human settlements in Africa - the role of housing and building" had already been issued for HABITAT, that is, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, to be held in Vancouver, Canada in mid-1976, which ECA hoped would be a success.

55. During the discussions of this programme, the Committee said that it too hoped the HABITAT Conference would be a success. Regarding the subject matter of the programme in human settlements, an appeal was made for stress to be put on training in this sector, because of the shortage of African architects. Furthermore, whereas emphasis was on low-density housing, medium-cost houses for the middle classes should also be given consideration. It should not be forgotten that in some countries there were special problems involved when people insisted on building their own housing. In the same vein, there was need to indicate a country's needs in development plans for use by outside donors.

56. The Committee agreed that the shanty-towns referred to in the programme were a feature of African urban centres and also rural areas. That was a problem which called for physical planning and the development of the physical environment, which planners must take into account. There was an immediate need for an integrated policy, because when an organization took no steps to deal with the problem there was no hope of improving living conditions. The supply of water, electricity and health facilities in rural areas was the key to eliminating slums, as had already been recognized in one African country. In that connexion, it was also hoped that ECA would continue to help in efforts to reduce or avoid congestion of populations, and to try to induce people to settle in rural areas.

57. The Committee also noted that problems of human settlements emanated from the process of development to a modernized society. The other problems characterizing the African scene were big projects, drought and invasion or war. There the question of human settlements and rehabilitation arose. It was recognized that indigenous populations were important in solving some of the problems of human settlements, for example in constructing their own houses, schools, etc. However, there was a need for an exchange of experience among African countries on the matter. Often, it was observed, African development in this field was overtaken by the sophistication of technology leading to the widening of the gap between rural and urban areas.

58. In another vein, ECA was urged to take account in its programme of low-rent housing as opposed to low-cost housing, as well as houses for the masses instead of high-rise buildings and shanty-towns or slums. In solving those problems at the country level the inadequate flow of foreign resources was seen as a major constraint.

59. Reference was made to the need for utilization of locally available building materials. Studies of a comparative nature with regard to labour-intensive methods of construction, the skills required and per capita income generated were urged for inclusion in the work programme in human settlements. The lack of mention in the programme of the disposal of human waste was observed. Furthermore, the lack of interest by donors in financing housing, and the lack of satisfactory financing terms, came up in the discussion, and ECA was urged to initiate a dialogue on the principles to be applied with financial organizations, including the World Bank.

60. It was stressed that the problem of human settlements was associated with that of refugees returning home, especially in the case of newly independent States, and that gave added weight to the need to involve populations in such activities as the building of roads for themselves and their own premises in rural areas using local materials.

61. The representative of UNESCO drew the Committee's attention to the fact that United Nations documents used the term "Etablissements humains" instead of "Peuplements humains" as in ECA document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1. He then suggested a more detailed project aim in project 9.291 on policies and programmes for housing, building, physical planning and town planning. He advocated participation of the local population as users in the design and development of housing. He also suggested that the training of architects should be interdisciplinary and given at their place of origin if the needs of the people were to be properly interpreted. UNESCO, he said, was ready to co-operate with ECA in implementing programmes of that kind.

Industrial development

62. The secretariat explained that the work programme in industrial development had been formulated on the basis of several decisions, including General Assembly resolutions, the Declaration on Industrialization in Africa and the Lima Declaration on Industrial Development and Co-operation, the decisions of the Third Conference of African Ministers of Industry, and in co-operation with UNIDO, with which ECA had established a Joint Industry Division. The key projects in the programme related to industrial policies and planning (section 9.331); multinational co-operation in the development of basic industries (section 9.332); institution building (section 9.333) and the development of small-scale and rural industries (section 9.334). Specific reference was made to project 9.334.28 on visits to selected countries to study the organization of small-scale and rural industries in the context of integrated rural development, which would include visits to the Republic of China where considerable expertise had been gained in that field.

63. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the programme was founded on recommendations of the Conference of African Ministers of Industry and the guidelines drawn up by UNIDO. The important idea, it was observed, was that African States should process their own resources on the spot. There was a need to undertake integrated efforts to achieve industrialization.

64. It was absolutely essential that ECA should henceforth orient its industrial development activities towards project implementation and not new studies. Furthermore, attention was drawn to the need for training and industrial promotion functions, without which gains were impossible. It was unfortunate that the programme contained no components relating to standardization and quality control, although the secretariat had drawn attention to projects 9.331.01(a)(v) and 9.333.05 on the establishment of a Centre for the Design, Adaptation and Transfer of Industrial Technology, which would take questions of standardization and control into account.

65. Inasmuch as industrialization was seen as the touchstone of development, ECA was urged to carry out studies appraising African industrialization. With regard to the provision of consultancy services, it was suggested that ways and means should be found of involving Africans in such endeavours. It was also proposed that ECA should not restrict itself to the harmonization of African global consultations; it should also attempt to improve national capabilities in industrial policies. The development of indigenous entrepreneurship capabilities was a problem which also needed stressing in the programme. Furthermore, the need to provide assistance not only to new but also to existing industrial estates should not be lost sight of.

66. The representative of FAO indicated that his organization was also concerned with industrialization in agriculture, citing the examples of processing of cereals, vegetable oil, meat, sugar, hides and skins, etc. He said that there were readily available publications on the subject of processing, refrigeration of perishables, etc. With regard to mechanization and intermediate technology, he pointed out that tractor mechanization had not been very successful and was not suited to the immediate environment. Nevertheless, FAO continued to investigate mechanization centres for low-cost equipment, and the success in Uganda might perhaps be applied in other countries. That was equally true in the case of cereal processing, where successful experience could be spread elsewhere.

67. The Committee took note with satisfaction of the co-operation between FAO and the ECA Division, particularly in the provision of experts (regional advisers) in the field of forestry and food; it further noted with interest ECA's concern to promote intermediate technology, as was evident in the project on small-scale industries.

International trade

68. Introducing the programme in international trade, the secretariat explained that the programme had been formulated on the basis of all recent resolutions on the subject, including the anticipated results of the fourth session of UNCTAD and the extent of the trade imbalance between the African region and the developed market economy countries. Major among the projects of the Division of International Trade were restructuring of Africa's external trade (section 9.341), development of intra-African trade (section 9.342), assistance to member countries in ensuring control of foreign trade by national structures (section 9.343) and establishment and strengthening of trade institutions (section 9.344).

69. At the request of the Committee the secretariat also gave a progress report on the fourth session of UNCTAD. The Committee was informed that ECA had distributed a number of documents to African delegations at Nairobi. The documents had been prepared specifically to assist the African countries in their discussions and negotiations on the various issues before UNCTAD at its fourth session. Regarding the outcome of the Conference, the latest information available concerned issues relating to the Integrated Programme for Commodities, debt problems of developing countries, transfer of technology and economic co-operation among developing countries. The Conference had adopted an Integrated Programme for commodities, including specific objectives, commodity coverage and international measures. It had also decided to convene a negotiating conference open to all members of UNCTAD on an equal footing not later than March 1977, to be preceded by preparatory meetings on a number of key aspects thereof. The preparatory meetings for international negotiations on individual products would also be convened in the period beginning 1 September 1976. These meetings would complete their work not later than February 1978. Furthermore, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD had been requested to convene, when required, commodity negotiating conferences which should be concluded by the end of 1978.

70. Regarding the question of the debt problem of developing countries, the secretariat indicated that the resolution adopted by the Conference had failed to meet the basic demands put forward by the developing countries. That was all the more regrettable from the standpoint of African countries as their debt burden had risen from about \$6 billion in 1965 to more than \$20 billion in 1972-1973. With respect to transfer of technology, the Conference had requested OAU and ECA, in collaboration with UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNESCO and WIPO, to convene a meeting of plenipotentiaries in 1977, preceded by appropriate preparatory work, to establish an African Centre for the development and transfer of technology. As regards economic co-operation among developing countries, it had been decided to hold a ministerial meeting in Mexico in September 1976 which would aim in particular at implementing the relevant recommendations adopted at the third ministerial meeting of the Group of 77. That meeting would be preceded by an expert group meeting to be held in Geneva in July 1976.

71. During the discussions, the Committee highly commended the work programme in international trade and hoped that the implementation would be rapid. Nonetheless, reservations were expressed on project 9.341.03 on establishment of multinational import and export enterprises, since the subject was taken care of at the national

level, to which the secretariat replied that ECA would provide assistance only at the specific request of member States. To the point that project 9.341.04 on co-operation in raw materials, through the establishment and strengthening of producers' associations, should be of an international and not regional character, the secretariat said this would be observed to the extent possible, although there were instances where such co-operation was best confined to subregions or to a region, at least in the initial stages.

72. The establishment of an African common market, envisaged in section 9.344.05, was welcomed, but ECA was urged to take into consideration the political aspects of this matter. However, it was explained by the secretariat that the matter came under the competence of the OAU Ministers of Trade, and that in fact the project concerned carrying out studies on the possibilities of a common market rather than the establishment of one.

73. In response to a request for clarification on section 9.341.03, it was explained that it would naturally be up to member States themselves to make arrangements for the establishment of multinational import and export enterprises. As far as ECA was concerned, it would first examine the situations obtaining at the national level and then make proposals for action in this field in close co-operation with the governments concerned. Referring to the question raised on transit trade, the secretariat drew attention to the link between the work of the transport division and trade in this matter.

74. Reference was made to middlemen and the need to eliminate them, and the secretariat informed the Committee the project had been in the work programme for a long time and that priority would certainly be accorded to the problem. The secretariat also took note of the need to organize training activities in order to decolonize the minds of Africans so that they would choose locally produced products in preference to imported ones.

75. The secretariat explained that the mobilization of resources was the concern of the Socio-economic Research and Planning Division. The programme on fiscal, monetary and financial policies and institutions centred on ensuring the promotion of changes in the production structure and facilitating economic and financial co-operation in the region, serving as a means of providing institutional economies of scale, supporting intra-African trade and optimizing the financial and monetary relations of the region with the outside world. The key project consisted of section 9.513 on inter-African co-operation in fiscal and monetary policies and banking.

76. In the ensuing discussion a suggestion was made that the programme should be amended in order to take account of the resolutions adopted at the fourth session of UNCTAD, and the secretariat undertook to do so. It was further noted that the evaluation of fiscal policies in relation to development was missing from the programme, whereas there was a need for ECA to provide technical assistance to countries and territories in that field. It was explained that that matter was taken care of within the project relating to fiscal, monetary and financial issues at the national level (9.245.02). Moreover, there was a need to implement the resolutions on the subject.

Labour, management and employment

77. The work programme in labour, management and employment was introduced. It centred on assisting member States to develop a national administrative and institutional capability for manpower assessment and programming, as well as advising on the formulation of policies for manpower utilization and employment generation. The programme would be executed in co-operation with the appropriate divisions within the secretariat and with AAU, CAFRAD, FAO, IDEP, UNESCO, UNIDO and WEO.

78. The main components of the programme were policies and planning for manpower programming and employment promotion (section 9.441) and manpower development and analysis (section 9.442).

79. In the discussion of this programme, which was comprehensive, the Committee urged ECA to work closely with ILO in order to get the programme implemented with the best possible results. Supporting that view, the representative of ILO expressed the hope that ECA would in future extend its co-operation to the Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa (JASPA) so that the combined efforts of the two organizations would benefit member States.

Public administration and finance

80. The main features of the programme in public administration and finance were policies and planning for public administration and financial management (section 9.501), development, restructuring, strengthening and improvement of government administrative structures and institutions (section 9.502), development and management of public enterprises (section 9.503), development and management of budgetary and financial systems (section 9.504) and training and development of personnel for development administration and financial management (section 9.505). The basis for drawing up this programme, it was explained, was self-reliance on the part of member States.

81. The Committee endorsed the programme and urged its immediate execution by ECA.

Natural resources

82. The projects in the field of natural resources were scientific in nature; no studies were to be undertaken, and the staff were to keep themselves informed about scientific developments on a global basis. Overall the programme was aimed at assisting Governments in the formulation of appropriate policies and in the planning and management of natural resources in all stages of development, including exploration, inventory, exploitation, marketing and utilization, and in the establishment of institutions of research and training in those fields. Among the organizations ECA co-operated with in the execution of the programme were the United Nations Headquarters Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport, FAO, UNDP and UNESCO.

Mineral resources

83. It was stated that Africa was endowed with potential mineral resources which were not well surveyed, but there were only three staff members working in that field at ECA. The secretariat was trying to help member States in the development of mineral policy as well as the legal aspects of the development of mineral resources. The components of the programme centred mainly on the promotion of exploration, exploitation

and utilization of mineral resources in Africa (section 9.463) and multinational co-operation in the development of basic and strategic industries based on mineral resources (section 9.464).

Energy

84. The programme in the field of energy aimed at encouraging exploration, systematic planning and optimum development of energy resources in Africa and promoting, where practicable, multinational co-operation in their exploitation and use, as well as co-ordinating their development policies. The second aspect entailed the promotion of small-scale production and distribution of electrical energy for rural development, and the third the promotion of the development and extensive use of non-conventional sources of energy, in particular solar, geothermal and nuclear energy. Those aspects of the programme featured in document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1 (sections 9.470, 9.471 and 9.472 respectively).

Water resources

85. The programme in water resources centred on two major components, namely section 9.466, planning and development of national water resources, and section 9.467, manpower training and research in the field of water development (see E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1/Add.1). The snag, it was explained, was that at the moment there was nobody in the unit charged with the programme. In future, however, the secretariat would continue to co-operate with the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport at Headquarters, UNESCO and WEO, which were currently helping ECA to prepare for the Regional Water Conference in September 1976.

Cartography

86. The programme in cartography aimed at assisting countries of the region in the development of efficient cartographic services (see section 9.475 in document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1/Add.1).

Environment

87. In this programme the secretariat sought to bring out the major environmental problems in human settlements, and to do so effectively advocated the management of natural resources for environmental quality, identification and control of pollutants, educational and informational aspects of the environment, and a study of the effects of environmental considerations on development (see section 9.478 in document E/CN.14/TECO/31 Rev.1/Add.1). Furthermore, on the question of environment it was pointed out that attention should be given to desertification and the eradication of malaria and bilharzia.

Science and technology

88. The work programme in science and technology, presented in document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1/Add.1, fell into four broad areas, namely: promotion of governmental machinery for policy making and planning in science and technology (section 9.521); the development of manpower for science and technology (section 9.522); promotion of the African Regional Plan for the Application of Science and Technology to Development (section 9.523); promotion of regional co-operation in science and technology (section 9.524).

89. In the discussion of the over-all programme in natural resources, the Committee considered the programme as being a balanced one, but made the following observations.

90. It was asked whether project 9.473.01 on the development of non-conventional sources of energy would include the study of tidal energy. The secretariat undertook to look into the matter.

91. In view of the need to diversify Africa's energy resources it was stressed that it was high time that member States, with the assistance of ECA, started to look into the possibilities of using other non-conventional sources of energy. Manpower shortages in the field of energy were, of course, a constraint, and the Committee therefore welcomed section 9.471.01(a)(ii) dealing with training. It was further urged that efforts should be made at the national level to interest young people in problems relating to science and technology, as was already the case in one African country.

92. Reference was made to sterile natural resources straddling African frontiers, and it was felt that studies of such enclaves would be useful for the eventual harnessing of such resources for development. In the same vein, the inclusion of a project dealing with underground water resources in arid zones was highly recommended, and it was noted that there was a shortage of trained manpower in that area. The secretariat was also asked to include studies on desalination of sea water, a proposal which ECA undertook to work on and follow up.

93. Referring to the United Nations Water Conference, to be held in Argentina in 1977, the Committee expressed the hope that despite the absence of permanent staff in the water resources unit the Regional Water Conference in September 1976 would rise to, if not above, the level of previous studies. A member of the Committee promised to make available to the Regional Water Conference a paper which had been prepared on the subject in his region.

94. It was suggested that the secretariat, in its studies, should take into account the cultural aspects of the environment. In addition the Divisions of Trade and Natural Resources should study ways and means of jointly assessing the impact of environmental concerns on the cost of the products African countries imported from the industrialized world.

95. On the subject of mineral resources development, including the subregional mineral resources development centres, a plea was made to those countries which had not signed the document establishing the Mineral Development Centre in the United Republic of Tanzania to do so if the efforts of the Commission in this area were to become meaningful.

96. Concluding the debate on the subject of natural resources and science and technology, the Committee stressed that training experience in the field of science and technology needed to be exchanged among member States, and that it was equally important that all the other United Nations agencies, including various regional organizations and other countries, should facilitate the dissemination of information in that field. Furthermore, the ECA secretariat should follow up UNCTAD work in the field.

Population

97. The work programme in population was introduced. It centred on three broad topics, namely: relevant aspects of population policies and programmes within the framework of economic and social development (section 9.481); techniques relating to the demographic aspects of economic and social development (section 9.482); and regional training and research (section 9.483). It was explained that in preparing the programme all the most recent resolutions on the subject had been taken into account.

98. In the discussions that followed, it was pointed out that the text adopted by the Regional Post-World Population Conference Consultation held at Lusaka in 1975 had not been mentioned among the legislative instruments for the programme. It was, however, agreed that the programme as presented was in consonance with the priorities laid down at that meeting.

99. One representative said that it would be desirable for countries to make efforts to lower high rates of population growth, especially in cases where population growth outstripped the rate of socio-economic development. African leaders were asked to ensure that rates of population growth did not negate their development efforts. It was also mentioned that project No. 9.482.02 was very important and had to be given emphasis since it would help African governments to obtain the demographic projections needed for socio-economic development planning. One representative doubted whether, in view of the underpopulation of Africa, there was need to control population growth. However, he recognized the usefulness of family planning because of the impact it had on family well-being. The representative of the secretariat pointed out that policies were bound to differ depending on the conditions in and aspirations of the countries concerned. It was for the secretariat to recognize such differences and to be ready to give advice to all countries according to their particular policies. In that regard it was stressed that the United Nations fund for Population Activities, for instance, was giving assistance to countries in Central Africa in determining causes of infertility and sub-fertility in their subregion.

100. The secretariat agreed to mention the decisions of the Regional Post-World Conference Consultation as one legislative origin for the programme.

Social development

101. The work programme in social development had six major components, namely: social policy, planning and research (section 9.531); integrated rural development (section 9.532); youth and national development (section 9.533); family and child welfare (section 9.534); the establishment of national and regional machinery for the integration of women in the development process (section 9.535) and formal and non-formal training of women (section 9.536).

102. During the exchanges of view on this programme, references were made to the involvement of women and youth in development, child and family welfare, foodstuffs for children, child care facilities, the workload of working women and the need for studies on the subject, and lastly the ECA Centre for Women. A plea was made for additional resources for the Centre, more aid to women in non-liberated areas of Africa and the involvement of all men in projects for women.

103. The Committee was informed that the second Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs would be held in 1977 (project 9.531.27). It was being sponsored by ECA and the Egyptian Government; OAU had been invited to give it political support. It was mentioned that one of the main objectives of this Conference was the establishment of the African Research and Training Centre for Social Development. The hope was expressed that as many States as possible would be represented at the Conference.

104. At the end of the discussion on the social development programme it was observed that the programme made no reference to the handicapped. The secretariat took note of that comment.

Statistics

105. The work programme in statistics had two basic functions: the first was to assist in the development of the statistical services in African countries, and the second was to provide information services at a regional level.

106. It was also explained that most projects were of a continuing nature but that there were three new elements in the programme, namely: (i) the conversion of the existing regional information service into a systematic data bank operation; (ii) a follow-up operation to the current African census programme conceived as the African household survey capability programme, and (iii) other special arrangements arising from the revised African strategy and the resolutions on the new international economic order.

107. The Committee endorsed the statistical programme in full.

Transport and communications and tourism

108. According to document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1, the work programme for transport, communications and tourism contained five major components, namely: planning and development of African transport (section 9.551); international roads and road transport (section 9.552); development of tourism (section 9.553); communications: development of telecommunications (section 9.554); and communications: improvement of postal services (section 9.555).

109. Before discussing the programme, the Committee's attention was drawn to the area programmes in integrated rural development and for the least developed and landlocked African countries contained in document E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1/Add.1.

110. The Committee commended the work programme in the fields of transport, communications and tourism, and made the following remarks.

111. ECA was urged to go thoroughly into the question of communications in the landlocked countries by guiding member States in the development of their communications facilities, including transport on lakes and rivers. It was further observed that although a great deal of work had already been accomplished on the Trans-Saharan Road, there was no mention of the road in the work programme. Furthermore, the development of rural roads needed greater emphasis in the programme, and the secretariat undertook to redraft section 9.551.03 on the subject.

112. Mass communication through radio and other media was seen as an important aspect of development, and it was explained that the secretariat would review project 9.554.05

dealing with the social aspects of the information media. With regard to lake transport (section 9.551.05) the representative of the secretariat explained that there would be a shift from the West African subregion to the great lake area.

113. It was pointed out that trade fairs were not mentioned in the work programme and it was suggested that they should be included.

114. Speaking of the programme on transport, communications and tourism, the representative of UNESCO recalled that only a few countries had followed up the recommendations of the United Nations/UNESCO/ECA joint seminar on space communications held in October 1973 in Addis Ababa, and he feared that the forthcoming meeting on space communications to be held in September 1976 in Addis Ababa might meet the same fate. He urged that that non-application of recommendations should not become a practice.

115. The representative of UNSO explained that there was a great deal of information on river basins available from some African organizations on water, and he urged ECA to take such studies into account with a view to avoiding duplication. He also urged greater use of the telecommunication infrastructure in rural development.

116. Concluding the debate on the Revised Medium-term Plan for 1976-1981 (E/CN.14/TECO/31/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1), the Committee thanked the Executive Secretary for his courage in presenting such an ambitious programme. On behalf of the ECA Conference of Ministers it endorsed the plan, which could now be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for approval in July (see the resolution in the annex to this report).

117. The Committee noted that the document was an important one as it concerned the improvement of the welfare of the people of the African continent. The Plan of Action would, therefore be a vital element in the great leap forward. There was, however, a need to mobilize human and financial resources for the implementation of the programme, and a plea to that effect was made to the OPEC countries, ADB and other sources. It was noted that of the regional commissions' budgets ECA's was probably the smallest. A plea was made to all African diplomatic services to take account of the need to increase the financial means of ECA to carry out its work. The appeal was directed mainly to African groups acting collectively in international forums and to African delegations within the deliberative organs of the United Nations where decisions are made about resource allocation. Such organs include the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, especially its fifth Committee. The broad implication was that effective and forceful action was required on the part of African delegations at meetings of those bodies. However, the Committee was quick to note that all Africa's development plans should be based on the principle of self-reliance. The Committee thanked all those agencies that maintained close co-operation with ECA in implementing its work programme.

Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1975 (agenda item 5)

118. The Committee had before it the following documents, all of which were introduced by a member of the secretariat for discussion:

- (i) E/CN.14/645 (Part I): Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1975;
- (ii) E/CN.14/645 (Part II): Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1975; and

(iii) E/CN.14/645/Summary: Summary of the Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1975.

119. In his introduction, the representative of the secretariat informed the Committee that the Survey consisted of two parts and that Part I consisted of two sections. The first section covered the international economic situation, the search for a new international economic order and economic developments and policies in the ECA region in 1974 and 1975. The second section in Part I was a study of the origin and consequences of inflation in Africa. For the year in which there was no biennial review, ECA normally selected one topic of current interest to African countries for consideration in the Survey, and inflation had been selected as the major topic for detailed coverage in the 1975 Survey.

120. Part II covered current economic developments and policies in member countries of the region, with the main emphasis on 1974 and 1975. This part had been drafted in close consultation with member governments, most of whom had nominated country consultants to write the first draft of each country report. This procedure had been adopted in order to take full account of the views of Governments and to ensure that up-to-date official data was included.

121. Many members of the Committee felt that the Survey met a need and was of high quality, and that it must have required a great deal of work by the secretariat. One member, however, felt that the Survey should have contained more concrete suggestions concerning the policies which African countries should follow in their development efforts, both individually and in groups. In reply to this comment, the Executive Secretary said that the primary objective of the Survey was to report to the world what the situation in Africa was at a given point in time. Policies were not always spelled out specifically, but could be gleaned from reading between the lines. In addition, in each survey, ECA always tried to identify a major theme (inflation in the 1975 Survey), and the part of the Survey in which that theme was discussed contained policy suggestions to member countries.

122. The quality of the Survey depended entirely on the co-operation which ECA received from member Governments. The document was useful not only to African governments but also to research institutes, donor agencies and governments outside the region. It was always discussed by the main organs of the United Nations system, particularly by the Economic and Social Council. Outside judgements on Africa's performance were largely based on the Survey.

123. The Survey for 1976 was already in preparation. It was hoped that the first draft would be ready for a meeting of the Working Group of the Committee for Development Planning scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa from 13 to 17 December 1976. The final version would be ready for the ECA Conference of Ministers meeting at Kinshasa early next year. He appealed for co-operation from member Governments so that those deadlines could be met. In 1975, a number of staff members had had to be sent to member States to collect information because of a lack of anticipated response from Governments. That was a very expensive method of data collection.

124. All members indicated that they were fully satisfied with their own country reports as they appeared in the Survey. They were grateful that the secretariat had attempted to discuss issues of major importance to African countries, such as inflation, self-reliance, and economic co-operation. One member felt that, while monetary and

fiscal policies and disturbances in industrialized countries were major causes of inflation in Africa, the fundamental cause was related to patterns of consumption which had been imported from advanced countries without due recognition of the circumstances prevailing in Africa. In the past, economists had felt that the gap between the developing and developed countries could be closed if the developing countries followed the same patterns as the developed countries. However, it was wrong to assume that all countries would develop in the same direction. Africa should not blindly imitate models from outside. There was need for new consumption models based on African conditions, with due account being taken of the continent's needs and resources. The ECA secretariat should direct some attention in that direction.

125. Another member felt that the effects of imported inflation could be mitigated by the development of barter arrangements and the strengthening of the subsistence sector.

126. In response to some of the issues raised, the representative of the secretariat referred to the documentation being prepared for the sixth session of the Conference of African Planners, which would be held in September 1976. The main theme of the session had been entitled "Unified approach to development analysis and planning", and in that context, the Conference would discuss inter alia, the structure of consumption which was related to the distribution of income, the production of mass consumer goods, integrated rural development, and the role of rural public works programmes in combating unemployment. In a unified approach the social as well as the economic aspects of development were stressed.

127. In concluding its discussion of the survey, the Committee commended the idea of government involvement in the preparation of country surveys, because it minimized the possibility of dispute over sensitive issues. Finally it stressed the importance of co-operation and self-reliance as providing an answer to many African problems.

Progress report on the establishment of a regional data bank with special reference to country participation

128. The Committee considered a report on progress in developing a regional data bank, comprising an information and documentation centre and a statistical filing and processing system (E/CN.14/ECO/97).

129. The Executive Secretary's initiative in promoting the project was warmly welcomed by the Committee, which stressed the importance of country participation through inputs to the bank in the form of statistical and other information. It was felt that the bank could make a significant contribution towards meeting the data requirements of African countries.

130. Stress was laid on the importance of co-operation between the ECA secretariat and the specialized agencies in developing the project. Particular reference was made to work already being undertaken by UNESCO on the establishment of national documentation centres, and to the help which FAO could give in supplying documentation.

131. The Committee believed that the success of the data bank would depend on the acquisition of adequate financial and staff resources as well as on effective country participation. There would also be a need for training and for the establishment of standardized methodology and definitions in respect of the material to be included in the data bank.

132. A description was given of the National Documentation Centre in Morocco, which could supply its documentation to the regional project. That proposal was welcomed, and the secretariat reported that it was already in contact with that centre, whose technical experience would be most valuable for the regional centre.

133. The Committee also drew attention to the need for co-ordination of activities with other data banks in Africa and elsewhere. It noted that the regional data bank was envisaged as an integral part of the international data system.

134. On the question of security the secretariat assured the Committee that all necessary steps would be taken with respect to information of a confidential nature.

135. The Committee fully approved the establishment of the proposed regional data bank.

Meeting of the Economic and Social Council (Abidjan 1-8 July 1976)

136. Introducing the item, the Executive Secretary pointed out that, for the first time in its history, the Economic and Social Council was holding a part of its meeting outside New York and Geneva, and that it was a great honour for Africa that Abidjan had been chosen as the venue. He appealed to member countries to ensure that the African countries members of the Council were represented at the highest level, so that their contribution could have the highest impact for Africa. The Council was a most important forum, where vital decisions were taken. It was therefore essential that African participation was such as to be most effective in the decision making process. It was further mentioned that the Government of the Ivory Coast had already sent invitations to member States of the Commission to attend the meeting.

Any other business

137. One representative raised the question of the future of the UNDATs. He also wished the Committee to be enlightened regarding the fact that some countries of the region were not covered by any of the existing UNDATs. In his reply, the Executive Secretary explained that the UNDATs had been set up under resolutions of the General Assembly and, as their name implied, they were multidisciplinary bodies. Seven such bodies had been set up, three in Africa. They were not intended to cover all countries, but only the least developed countries. Their financing originated partly from the United Nations regular budget, but the bulk of the finance was to come from bilateral donations, which had now been stopped owing to financial difficulties in the donor countries themselves. For the year 1976, UNDP had agreed to provide \$900,000 to support the UNDATs, while a further \$265,000 was to come from the United States Agency for International Development. The UNDP contribution was subject to a reappraisal of the activities of the UNDATs, and a Joint ECA/UNDP mission was currently in the field to carry out that exercise. The mission was also to consider the activities of the four ECA subregional offices to determine the extent of their complementarity with the UNDATs. The report of the mission was to be issued in July of 1976 and the UNDATs would appear as an item on the agenda of the fifteenth meeting of the Executive Committee, to be examined in detail before being submitted to the next Conference of Ministers which was planned for the beginning of 1977.

138. In the discussion which followed, one member of the Committee pointed out that the North African subregional office was currently without a Director and was seriously undermanned. He urged the secretariat to remedy that situation as quickly as possible. Since there was no UNDAT for that subregion, it was all the more essential that the subregional office should be in a position to cater satisfactorily for the countries of that region. In his reply, the Executive Secretary stated that the office was at no time without an officer-in-charge. Before the departure of the last incumbent, a staff member had been seconded from ECA to take over as officer-in-charge. As regards the staffing situation, action would be taken within the context of the restructuring of the secretariat and on the basis of the report of the mission currently in the field to evaluate the subregional offices and the UNDATs. On the question of establishing an UNDAT for the North African subregion, the Executive Secretary explained that the UNDATs had originally been conceived to assist the least developed countries and that there were no plans for setting up an UNDAT for that subregion. Furthermore, he felt that in the new approach, the Commission should move away from over-rigid compartmentalization in order to bring about greater co-operation between countries with common boundaries.

139. The second point raised concerned the furnishing and decoration of the new ECA building. The Executive Secretary stated that a positive response had been received from a number of countries, including the Libyan Arab Republic, which was interested in furnishing the library; Nigeria, a delegates' lounge; Egypt, Uganda and Morocco, a committee room each; Somalia, a waiting room, while Ethiopia, Ghana, Senegal, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania had general, as opposed to specific ideas as to their contribution. The Executive Secretary felt sure that other countries would soon be declaring their intentions. Now that the building was ready, the secretariat was eager to move in as soon as possible.

Date of the fifteenth session of the Executive Committee

140. The Executive Secretary proposed the dates of 12 to 15 October for the fifteenth session of the Committee, although those dates were subject to confirmation from the Government of Algeria, which would be asked to host the meeting. If those dates did not suit the Government, the meeting would have to be held early in December and a convenient date could be determined. The Committee agreed to the proposed arrangements. The Committee also agreed to the Executive Secretary's proposal that one of the two meetings of the Executive Committee each year should be held outside Addis Ababa.

Adoption of the report and closure of the session

141. The Committee adopted the present report on 2 June 1976.

ANNEX

Resolution

DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR 1976-1981

The Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the Conference of Ministers,

Having examined the revised draft medium-term plan of the Commission for the period 1976-1981 which has been prepared as an action programme based on the Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa ^{1/} approved by the Committee at an Extraordinary Meeting held from 16 to 18 February 1976,

Noting that the plan is in line with the spirit and principles of the New International Economic Order, in the formulation of which Africa has played an important role,

Further noting:

- (i) That the plan is in conformity with the Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa;
- (ii) That it reflects the aspirations of the member States, is balanced, forward-looking and imaginative and designed to promote self-reliance both at the national and at the regional levels,
- (iii) That it reflects the need for rapid, simultaneous and inter-linked advance on several strategic issues and for the installation, within the countries of the region, individually and collectively, of the components of an autonomous and self-sustaining engine of growth and diversification capable of being directed to meet such objectives of socio-economic development policy as an attack on mass poverty, the widespread development of capabilities for generating and retaining real income and the reduction of unemployment and under-employment;
- (iv) That it also lays emphasis on the transfer and development of technology and on manpower training for the achievement of self-reliance as well as on the promotion of economic co-operation among African countries between Africa and other regions and between African countries and other countries in the third world,

Recognizing that, as indicated in the draft medium-term plan for 1976-1981, the New International Economic Order in Africa calls for urgent action with a view to ensuring that the developing African countries obtain the maximum benefit under the New International Economic Order through the restructuring of their economies,

1. Endorses the draft medium-term plan;
2. Requests the Executive Secretary to transmit the plan to the Economic and Social Council;
3. Further requests the Executive Secretary to bring this vitally important document to the attention of all African organizations and institutions, especially OAU, with a view both to seeking their support in promoting the implementation of the plan and in obtaining the resources needed to implement it and to eliciting an expression of the necessary political will;
4. Calls on all the competent bodies in the United Nations, particularly the Economic and Social Council and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, to provide ECA with the additional resources it needs to implement this medium-term plan in respect of both the period 1976-1977 and the period 1978-1981;
5. Also calls on the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the World Food Council and the United Nations Sahelian Office to co-operate with and provide material support to ECA in the implementation of the medium-term plan;
6. Endorses the efforts being made by the Executive Secretary to mobilize extra-budgetary resources from African countries and institutions and from non-African donor countries and institutions in order to supplement the resources made available from the regular budget of the United Nations;
7. Decides to submit the medium-term plan to the Technical Committee of Experts and to the fourth meeting of the Conference of Ministers.