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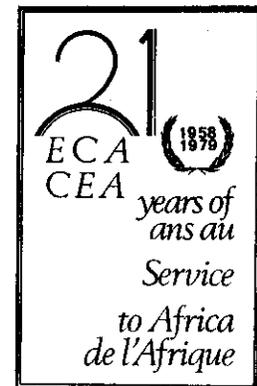
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Fourteenth session

Fifth meeting of the Conference  
of Ministers

Rabat, 20-28 March 1978

AGENDA ITEM 15 (b)



REPORT OF THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL  
OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL CENTRE FOR TECHNOLOGY

(Addis Ababa, 3-7 November 1978)

### Opening and duration of the meeting

1. The first special session of the Council of the African Regional Centre for Technology was held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 3 to 7 November 1978. The session was presided over by Mr. Wadie Habashi (the Sudan), first Vice-Chairman of the Council, in place of Mr. C.D. Msuya (Chairman), who was not able to attend the special session.
2. The Chairman, after extending a warm welcome to members, invited the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to address the Council.

### Opening address

3. After welcoming participants to the session, Mr. Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, reiterated that the special council session had been convened specifically to select the host country for the Centre and to appoint staff to senior positions in the secretariat so that the Centre could start functioning before the end of 1978. He then reported on the highlights of activities since the first regular session of the Council.
4. Concerning membership, he reported that Cape Verde had acceded to the Constitution of the African Regional Centre for Technology, thus bringing the total number of States that had done so to 26.
5. With regard to actions called for by the first Council session, he indicated that the report of the mission on the location of the Centre had been circulated to all States members of the Centre and the comments received thereon had been sent to all Governments of States members of the Centre to facilitate consultations on the question of the location of the headquarters of the Centre. On the question of staff recruitment, the vacancy announcements for the posts of Executive Director and directors of divisions had been sent to all Governments of ECA member States seeking their assistance in bringing the announcements to the attention of prospective candidates. Responses

had been received from a number of candidates and their candidature was due for review by the Executive Board on 4 November 1978.

6. On the question of mobilization of financial resources for the Centre from OAU, the Chairman of the Council had sent a request for an initial subvention of \$US 50,000 in 1978 and for a regular annual subvention of \$US 100,000 thereafter to the Administrative Secretary-General of OAU. The matter had been considered by the thirty-first ordinary session of the OAU Council of Ministers which had met at Khartoum in July 1978. The Council of Ministers had referred the matter to the OAU Administrative Secretary-General with instructions to take the necessary budgetary measures for rendering assistance to the Centre.

7. In conclusion, the Executive Secretary reminded participants that all the good work which had so far been done towards the establishment of the African Regional Centre for Technology provided a sound foundation on which the Centre would be built. The task of completing the edifice was a challenging one which also required the utmost endeavour on the part of the States members of the Centre to ensure the translation of the Centre's ideals into an institution capable of promoting the advance of technological development in the African region.

#### Attendance

8. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following States members of the Centre: Benin, Burundi, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritania, Morocco, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Senegal, the Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Cameroon, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire.

9. In addition, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa were also represented at the meeting.

#### Election of officers

10. The Executive Secretary drew the attention of participants to the provisions of paragraph 4 of article 8 of the Constitution regarding the question of rotation of Chairman and other offices among the members of the Council. After a brief discussion, the Council decided that the office bearers elected at an ordinary session of the Council should hold office until they were replaced at the next ordinary session of the Council. Therefore the office bearers elected to serve the first council session in May 1978 would serve the first special sessions of the Council and any other such sessions until replaced at the second ordinary session of the Council, and there was therefore no need to elect any office bearers for the first special session of the Council.

#### Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

11. The Council unanimously adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Selection of a country to host the Centre
4. Consideration of the recommendations of the first special meeting of the Executive Board of the Centre
5. Other matters
6. Adoption of the report and closure of the session

12. On the organization of work, it was felt that the question of selection of a country to host the Centre was the most crucial issue before the first special session of the Council. It was necessary, therefore, to ensure that a decision on that crucial issue was taken by a fully representative Council; hence the necessity to allow more time for other delegations to arrive. The Council therefore decided to defer consideration of the item until Sunday, 5 November 1978, and to consider the other items on 6 and 7 November 1978, as already scheduled by the secretariat.

Selection of a country to host the Centre (agenda item 3)

13. The Chairman expressed hope that a consensus would emerge on the issue of selecting the host country and reminded the Council that, if no consensus emerged, then the decision would have to be taken by vote, as already agreed by the Council at its first session held at Arusha.

14. In response, the representatives of Nigeria and Zaire formally announced the decisions of their respective Governments to withdraw their candidatures. They also strongly hoped that their action would assist the Council in arriving at a consensus on the issue.

15. When it became apparent that none of the remaining five candidates wished to step down, the Council decided to allow the delegations of the candidate countries to hold further consultations under the chairmanship of the Executive Secretary of ECA, with a view to reaching a consensus on the issue.

16. Following the consultations the Executive Secretary presented the following report which all the candidate countries had agreed upon: (a) All the five countries reaffirmed their desire to host the Centre because of the importance they attached to it; (b) They agreed to give their full support to the Centre wherever it was located; (c) They agreed that a decision on the host country should be taken by secret ballot; and (d) They recommended, that after the ballot, whichever country was successful should be deemed to have been elected by consensus.

17. The Chairman of the Council outlined the voting procedure for selecting the host country and indicated that the successful country should obtain a simple majority of the votes of members present. To that end, the two candidates receiving the least votes in the first ballot would be eliminated and two other candidates receiving the least numbers of votes in the second ballot would also be eliminated.

18. The Executive Secretary of ECA and Mr. Mfuni Tshiamanyanu, Acting Director of the Economic and Social Council of the Organization of African Unity, were appointed to act as tellers. The Chairman then invited the Council members to vote.

19. Results of the voting were as follows:

<u>First ballot</u>		<u>Second ballot</u>	
Senegal	8	Senegal	11
United Republic of Tanzania	5	United Republic of Tanzania	7
Ethiopia	3	Ethiopia	2
Kenya	2		
Sudan	2		

20. On the basis of the result of the second ballot, Senegal was declared the successful candidate and was therefore the country which would host the African Regional Centre for Technology.

21. Following the decision, the representative of Senegal expressed appreciation to the Council for the confidence it had placed in his country by electing it to host the African Regional Centre for Technology. He assured the Council that his country would take all necessary steps to support the Centre and to help it to achieve its objectives in the technological development of Africa.

Consideration of the recommendations of the first special meeting of the Executive Board held on 4 November 1978 (agenda item 4)

22. The Chairman of the Council presented the report of the first special meeting of the Executive Board held on 4 November 1978.

a) Attendance at Board meetings

23. With regard to attendance at the Board meetings, the representative of Benin sought the ruling of the Council on the participation of Council members not members of the Board at meetings of the Executive Board. In reply the Executive Secretary assured him that all members of the Council who were not members of the Executive Board were entitled to attend Board meetings as observers. He expressed regret for any inconvenience that might have been caused to some Council members in that regard.

b) Recruitment of the senior staff of the Centre

24. On the question of recruitment of the Executive Director and directors of divisions the Council endorsed the Board's view concerning the need to exert more effort to secure a greater number of qualified candidates. It approved the Board's recommendations subject to minor alterations. The Council accordingly decided:

(a) That an Interview Panel composed of specialists from Burundi, Guinea, Kenya and the Sudan, and OAU and ECA should be established to examine all applications received by ECA by 15 December 1978, prepare a short list of candidates and interview them for the posts of Executive Director and directors of substantive divisions of the Centre;

(b) That the secretariat should write to the Governments of each of the four member States constituting the Interview Panel to nominate a specialist in the field of technology to serve on the Panel on behalf of the Government;

(c) That the Panel should meet during the first week of January 1979 to review the applications received and prepare a short list;

(d) That the Panel should convene later in January 1979 to interview the short-listed candidates and submit its recommendations to the second special meeting of the Executive Board which would be convened by the Chairman as soon as possible after the interviews;

(e) That it (the Council) should, by delegation of its authority empower the second special session of the Executive Board to appoint the Executive Director, such appointment to be submitted to the Council at its next session for formal ratification;

(f) That the secretariat should also give the States members of the Interview Panel letters requesting the nomination of specialists mentioned in (b) above, and photo-copies of all applications received to date for the posts of Executive Director and directors of divisions of the Centre before their departure from Addis Ababa to their respective home countries;

(g) That the secretariat should furnish representatives of all member States attending the current session of the Council with copies of the vacancy announcements, which they would give wider publicity on their return home through the relevant ministries in their respective countries;

(h) That members of the Council not represented on the Interview Panel could participate in the meetings of the Panel in observer capacity;

(i) That the secretariat should supply copies of the vacancy announcements to OAU for transmission to its executive secretariats;

(j) That international organizations should also be requested to advertise the posts and advise applicants to forward their applications to ECA direct or through the international organization concerned;

(k) That international organizations should use their good offices to contact and encourage competent Africans serving in organizations outside the continent to apply for the advertised posts;

(l) That the Council of the Centre would finance the travel and per diem of candidates invited for interview and that member States would finance the participation of their representatives on the Panel.

25. In reply to a number of questions regarding the organization of the work of the Interview Panel, the Executive Secretary assured the Council that details concerning venue and dates of the meetings of the Panel would be conveyed to all concerned, and that candidates selected for interview would be contacted directly and through the Resident Representatives of the United Nations Development Programme in their respective countries as well as through their embassies in Addis Ababa.

c) Financial and administrative matters

26. The Council unanimously adopted paragraph 9 of the report of the Executive Board which dealt with the mobilization of resources from OAU.

27. The paragraphs relating to contributions by member States to the budget of the Centre were adopted with the following amendments and modifications:

(a) New paragraph 16: The representative of Guinea announced that his country's contribution had already been paid and was en route.

(b) New paragraph 17: The representative of Uganda also announced that his country's contribution would soon be paid.

(c) Old paragraph 17 should become new paragraph 19.

(d) Paragraph 19(a) should read as follows: "the deadline for remittance of members' contributions for 1978 financial year from their respective countries should be extended to 15 December 1978.

(e) Paragraph 19(b) should read as follows: "The deadline for the remittance of members' contribution for 1979 from their respective countries should be 1 August 1979".

(f) Paragraph 19(c) should read as follows: "The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa should be authorized to open and operate an external bank account in the name of the African Regional Centre for Technology at the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa in which contributions would be deposited. The account would cease to operate as soon as the Centre had established a permanent banking arrangement in Senegal".

Other matters (agenda item 5)

Exhibition of Science and Technology in Africa, Rabat, Morocco

28. The Executive Secretary of ECA informed the meeting of the arrangements for the celebration of the twenty-first anniversary of the Commission. He reported that at its Khartoum meeting the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU had adopted a resolution directing that an exhibition on scientific and technological development in Africa, with emphasis on the contributions of Africans in those fields, should be mounted during the ECA Conference of Ministers meeting scheduled to be held at Rabat, Morocco, in March 1979. Since no forum for the recognition of African efforts in those fields existed, the Assembly felt that such an exhibition would provide an excellent opportunity for according recognition to the efforts of African scientists and technologists. He also stated that the secretariat had written to all States members of ECA, of the Council of the Centre and other Governments informing them about the resolution and the background to it, but that, up to the time of reporting, only non-African countries had responded positively. He appealed to members of the Council to use their influence to ensure that African participation in the Rabat exhibition would include the original contributions of scientists and technologists in their respective countries, however modest, as that was just one of the ways to give a great spur to technological development in the continent.

29. The Chairman endorsed the remarks of the Executive Secretary and urged the secretariat to send appropriate reminders on the topic to all ECA member States.

Adoption of report and closure of meeting

30. The Council considered the draft report presented by the Rapporteur and adopted it after making necessary amendments.

31. In his closing remarks, the Chairman expressed his sincere gratitude to members of the Council for their co-operative contributions and the cordial atmosphere which had prevailed during the conduct of the meeting. He appealed to them to discharge their various responsibilities to the Centre in such a manner as would ensure its successful operations.

32. The Chairman then declared the first special session of the Council of the African Centre for Technology closed.