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REPORT ON TRAINING COURSE FOR CUSTOMS OFFICIALS
IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES OF WEST AFRICA

REPORT ON TRAINING COURSE FOR CUSTOMS OFFICIALS
IN ENGLISH -SPEAKING COUNTRIES OF WEST AFRICA

Lagos, 2 October - 24 November 1962

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REPORT ON TRAINING COURSE FOR CUSTOMS OFFICIALS
IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES OF WEST AFRICA

I. Organization and Attendance

1. The Working Party on Customs Administration in West Africa, which met in Dakar from 9 to 13 October 1961 gave consideration to the advisability of introducing courses for Customs officials with higher educational qualifications in the English-speaking countries and recommended that the type of course outlined in paragraph 5 of document E/CN.14/WPCA.4 might be arranged by the Secretariat with the co-operation of the Nigerian Government. The following subjects for the course had been suggested in the above document:

- (a) Customs Tariffs and Nomenclatures;
- (b) Technology;
- (c) Collection of duties;
- (d) Customs legislation;
- (e) Customs regimes;
- (f) Customs organization;
- (g) Organization of preventive service and prevention of smuggling;
- (h) Elementary economic geography of West Africa;
- (i) Problems of economic and tariff policy and its bearing in West Africa;
- (j) Elements of book-keeping and statistics.

2. The Nigerian Government accepted the invitation to act as host for the first course. The Commission undertook to provide a Director with secretarial assistance, to plan and organize the course and to supplement the existing training staff of the host country.

3. The somewhat wide scope of the syllabus which was envisaged at Dakar presupposed a course which would last about four months. Owing to the inability of the participating countries to spare staff from the middle grades of their Customs services for this period in sufficient numbers, however, the duration of the course was reduced to about two

months, whilst at the same time as much of the original curriculum as possible was retained. In these circumstances all the English-speaking countries except Sierra Leone responded enthusiastically when invited to send trainees. Sierra Leone was unfortunately unable to participate owing to its existing training commitment under the United Kingdom Technical Assistance Programme.

4. The director visited all the English-speaking countries to explain the educational level required of candidates for the course and to discuss the scope of the curriculum. As a result, the following numbers of candidates were selected to attend:

Nigeria	10
Ghana	4
Liberia	2
Gambia	1
	<hr/> 17 <hr/>

All visiting trainees were given fellowships and round-trip air passages under the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme.

II. Level of Education and Experience

5. It was intended that the candidates selected should have higher educational qualifications with some years' experience in their national Customs administrations. The selection of candidates was left to the governments concerned on the assumption that they were best qualified to decide which of their officers would benefit most from the proposed curriculum. Although some variations in the degree of qualification and length of experience were apparent as a result, the necessary higher level of education among candidates was for the most part maintained and on the whole resulted in a suitable type of trainee for the course. It was recognized that whilst it is desirable to standardize the qualifications of candidates for a course of this sort at those of a university degree or a school certificate with a certain number of years experience in government service, other considerations, particularly the availability of staff, may render this impracticable. It may thus be necessary to

include as candidates officers with lower qualifications but considerable experience or recently appointed university graduates, provided the governments and the director are satisfied that they will benefit from attendance.

III. Curriculum

6. The course, which was held at Lagos, Nigeria, in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Education, was opened by the Acting Minister of Finance of the Federation of Nigeria, Chief Omo-Osagie on 2 October 1962. The Acting Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise, Nigeria, Mr. A. Diyan and the Regional Adviser on Customs for ECA, Mr. D. J. Allen, who was directing the course, also spoke at the opening session. These speeches are reproduced in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 to this report. The course lasted until 24 November.

7. An entirely new syllabus for the course was planned and organized after consultation with officials of the Training Branch of the Board of Customs and Excise, Nigeria, and of the other participating countries. The syllabus is reproduced in Annex 4. As far as possible, the general principles of Customs work were taught, and instruction in the theory of the various subjects was followed in nearly every case by practical demonstration of the work at ports, airports, road frontiers and other Customs installations. The aim was that the instruction should be of lasting value to the trainees. To this end, as much basic material as possible in the form of text books and notes was distributed to them to supplement the lectures themselves.

8. Emphasis was placed on the need not only for technical proficiency under national systems but also for considering Customs problems on a West African, as well as on a national scale. Several subjects were therefore devoted to such matters as harmonization of fiscal policies, standardization of procedures and tariff nomenclatures, simplification of formalities and local co-operation between neighbouring countries of the sub-region. Practical illustrations of the progress made towards these goals were given not only in the context of local agreements such

as the recent convention between Nigeria and Dahomey but also in the wider international field through explanation of such instruments as the Customs Co-operation Council and the Customs Conventions on the International Transport of goods.

9. Finally, at the request of the Government of Nigeria, a short section of the course was devoted to modern management techniques, the tuition for which was provided by P. E. Management Group (Nigeria) Ltd., consultants to the Federal Ministry of Education, at the Management Training Centre, Lagos.

IV. The Role of ECA in Customs Training

10. The role of the Commission in contributing to the training of English-speaking Customs officials in the sub-region should be clarified. The existing training provided by national administrations is mostly for the benefit of subordinate personnel at the time of recruitment. There is also some provision for in-service training of officials at the time of entry into the senior grades either directly as cadets or on promotion, sometimes accompanied by a period of several months training in the United Kingdom. By this means the basic training of new officials is already well catered for in some countries. The needs of those countries which have not yet established their own schemes for basic training can best be met by making available to them the courses being held in the countries which already have such schemes. It was therefore suggested by the Working Party at Dakar in paragraph 32 of its report that some of the national courses now being held in Nigeria should be made available to the other English-speaking countries.

11. The function of the courses sponsored by the Commission should accordingly be to supplement this basic training by providing advanced training for promising officers with some years' experience in the senior services of their departments (subject to certain reservations noted in paragraph 5 above) and generally equipping them with that broader knowledge which they need to undertake the positions of greater responsibility which are confronting them and to meet confidently the

challenge which the complexities of modern Customs work arising from industrial development, trade promotion and impending economic groupings presents to the Customs administrations of developing countries. Using a carefully selected curriculum to train officers at the rate of about 20 a year, it should be possible by this means to provide the countries with a nucleus of staff trained for positions of the highest responsibility.

12. It may be considered that as far as the English-speaking countries are concerned, the most economical method of gradually transferring the responsibility for advanced training from ECA to sub-regional resources would be to provide a central training school for the English-speaking countries. Some countries are already well equipped with the training staff needed for this purpose. What is lacking at present is suitable permanent accommodation in which to house the courses involved in a scheme for advanced training on a sub-regional basis.

ANNEX 1UNITED NATIONS COURSE ON CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATIONOPENING SPEECH BY THE HON. ACTING MINISTEROF FINANCE, CHIEF OMO-OSAGIE

Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and people of the Federation of Nigeria, I am very happy to welcome here today the trainees from nearly all the English-speaking countries of West Africa who have come here under United Nations scholarships to participate in this Course on Customs Administration. I hope you will enjoy your stay here and return home with the feeling that the Course has been of real assistance to you.

It gives us particular pleasure to see you here because we know that your presence signifies an attempt to solve one of the many problems confronting young African nations in the development of their economies: namely, that of facilitating trade relations between each other. It goes without saying that any other course would lead to the contraction rather than the expansion of our respective economies.

If trade is to expand, it is absolutely essential that Customs systems and formalities be standardised and simplified as far as possible. At the same time, we must ensure that our young industries are protected and to this end, we must improve the Tariff structure applicable to goods coming from more developed countries. We must also wage a joint war against the smuggling which is so detrimental to our economies and to the finance of our respective states.

All this demands a high standard of knowledge and competence on the part of the Customs officials charged with this work. It is therefore a hopeful sign to see you gathered together here making a joint effort to reach the standards required for attaining these objectives and at the same time being given an opportunity of cultivating that spirit of economic solidarity which is so essential to our common

prosperity. I trust that you will take the best advantage of your time here so as to fit yourselves for the important tasks which lie ahead.

May I also, on behalf of our Government and People express my thanks to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa for its welcome initiative in sponsoring this Course and to its representative, Mr. Allen, in planning and organizing it. As to his thanks for our hospitality, may I say that we are only too glad to provide the facilities for this Course and he can depend upon our assistance in any measure needed to promote it, now and in the future.

Gentlemen, it now gives me very great pleasure to declare this Course open.

ANNEX 2

UNITED NATIONS COURSE ON CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION
OPENING SPEECH BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE, NIGERIA

On behalf of the members of the Board and the entire staff of the Department of Customs and Excise of Nigeria, I bring you a very hearty welcome to our country.

I understand we have 17 Officers of Customs and Excise on this Course made up of:-

- 1 from the Gambia,
- 2 from Liberia,
- 4 from Ghana and
- 10 from Nigeria.

We had expected to have 2 Officers from the Federal Republic of Cameroon but I understand they have not arrived. We do hope they will turn up at the earliest possible time during this Course, and for them awaits our hearty welcome knowing, as we do, the tie which until very recently, existed between Nigeria and the Western Cameroon.

As you are all probably aware, this Course is a result of the implementation of one of the recommendations which were made by the Working Party on Customs Administration which met in Dakar from 9th to 13th October, 1961, and we regret that Sierra Leone, a country which was represented at the Sessions of the Working Party, is unable to send Officers for this Course.

We are living in stirring times and the world in which we live is shrinking fast. One evidence of this is this Course. I had the privilege of being present in the sessions of the Working Party in Dakar and I am sure that I am expressing the view of all those who were in that Working Party when I say that we are very happy to find that one of the recommendations which have been implemented promptly

is the one for this Course and our sincere thanks go to the United Nations Organization in general and to the Economic Commission for Africa in particular for the organization of this Course.

No effort has been spared to make the Course interesting and informative but, as you are all aware, this is the first Course of this type to be held in West Africa - at least in the English-speaking countries of West Africa - and there is little doubt that it is not perfect.

Nevertheless, we trust that you will take full advantage of all that the Course offers. We also hope that everyone of you will at one stage or other, during the Course, or after you have returned to your countries, be able to make sound suggestions which will make similar future Courses of this type - and we do hope that there will be future Courses - easier for those who organize them and more worthwhile for those who undertake them.

The Board of Customs and Excise in Nigeria is happy to make available all the facilities that are at its disposal for this Course and you will in the course of events, see many aspects of our Customs Administration in this country.

Here again, I would like to say that the Customs Administration in Nigeria is not anything like the ideal but we are persistent in our struggle to improve standards and to make the service conditions as attractive as possible so that Officers will be able to look on the Administration as a career and not merely a jumping ground to other worthwhile undertakings.

We shall be very pleased if during the lectures or during the visits to some of our establishments, you bring to our notice any suggestions which you think could result in an improvement in our Administration.

It is only by comparison of Customs Administrations, especially in close countries like those which you represent, that reasonable efficiency can be attained by the individual countries and we do hope

that as a result of this Course and those which will follow, we all in English-speaking West Africa will attain our desired end which, I presume, is an incorruptible and efficient Customs Administration.

In this country we lay a great emphasis on incorruptibility in our Administration because as an organization which, at present, is responsible for the collection of about 80 per cent of the country's revenue, we realise that if Officers in our Department are corrupt, the very foundation of our country which is now an independent nation is in jeopardy.

We also emphasize efficiency, that is, maximum speed with the utmost accuracy, allied with the greatest courtesy to members of the public.

All these are, however, matters of detail which I trust will be emphasized from time to time during this Course, and I am sure that they will not sound strange to you as I know that we are all struggling to build on a sure and sound foundation.

Once more, I bid you welcome to Nigeria very heartily. I hope that your stay here will be interesting and that you will return to your various bases with pleasant memories.

Good luck to you all and God bless you.

ANNEX 3UNITED NATIONS COURSE ON CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATIONOPENING SPEECH BY THE DIRECTOR, MR. D. J. ALLEN

Hon. Minister and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, I should like to extend to the Government of Nigeria his warm appreciation of its hospitality in consenting to be the host country to this United Nations training course on Customs Administration. Its acceptance of this role is a most helpful gesture in the cause of West African economic co-operation.

May I also add my own personal appreciation for all the kind and efficient co-operation I have received from so many members of the government and business community in preparing and organizing the course. I can say with great sincerity that everywhere I have been in collecting the material for it, and I have had to go to quite a lot of places, I have always had the friendliest of receptions and the most helpful of attitudes in meeting my many requests. Since this has usually involved an officer in work which is additional to his own routine duties, it can be seen just how real and valuable this assistance has been.

I have also the privilege of thanking the Hon. Minister for coming here this morning to declare the course open. Your presence, Sir, serves once more to emphasize the interest shown by your Government in international co-operation. If any further reaffirmation of this was needed, it was surely contained in the speech of the Prime Minister of Nigeria to Parliament last week when he said: "Our most urgent need like Latin America's is an internal market large enough to absorb the products of growing industries, and this need points towards local cooperation and harmonization of African economies."

This indeed may be said to be one of the main themes of this course. We have today assembled here for the first time, Customs trainees from all the English-speaking countries of West Africa except Sierra Leone, that is to say, from Nigeria, from Ghana, from Liberia and from the Gambia. It is therefore something of a historical event and I hope it will be the forerunner of a series of such courses and of the establishment of Customs training on a West African or even an African scale.

It may be fitting to explain here how this course has come about. The Economic Commission for Africa is a United Nations instrument for helping the economic growth of African countries. As one method of accomplishing this, the Commission wishes to stimulate trade and industrial relations between the African countries themselves. To promote this objective, it established a Standing Trade Committee for Africa which was authorised to constitute Working Parties to consider the problem on a sub-regional basis. The very first Working Party to be thus organized was the Working Party on Customs Administration at Dakar last October which was attended by nearly all the West and Central African countries. This was because, of all the fundamental technical and administrative problems the solution of which is essential to any form of economic co-operation, the most pressing of these were thought to be found in the field of Customs administration.

Indeed it may be said that Customs Administrations are playing a crucial role in the present stage of development in West Africa, collecting as they do most of the revenue on which their governments depend, while their role as policy instruments is bound to increase too in the early stages of industrialisation. By this I mean that whilst the Customs do not normally formulate policies, it is essential to consult them on policy issues as there is often a significant gap between what is desirable and what is feasible.

All this led to the obvious conclusion that to collect the maximum amount of revenue and to facilitate trade between the countries, it was necessary to have efficient staff and to have efficient staff it was necessary to have sound training. The Working Party at Dakar therefore recommended that the United Nations Economic Commission should organize a training course for the English-speaking countries and Nigeria was asked to be the host for it. This it kindly consented to be and that is why we are assembled here today at the opening of this international course. The response to it of the participating countries has been most enthusiastic and is particularly creditable in the face of an almost universal shortage of staff to carry out the day-to-day work of their own Customs administrations. The fact that all these trainees have been released from their jobs to attend the course, places on us lecturers a heavy responsibility for ensuring that it is a success.

I would like to acknowledge here the debt of gratitude which I owe to the Chairman of the Board of Customs and Excise, Nigeria, and to all his Headquarters and Training staff on whose shoulders is borne a very large part of the instructional work of the course. Without their willing assistance, it would not have been possible to hold this course at all.

May I also express my thanks to the Principals of the Technical Institute and of the Management Training Centre, who have so kindly provided us with this and other excellent accommodation at a time when suitable accommodation is not easy to find in Lagos. My thanks are also due to the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Establishments, the Ministry of Information, the Nigerian Produce Marketing Co. Ltd., the Shell Co. of Nigeria Ltd., for their very kind assistance in providing instructional staff and material.

I will now call upon the Hon. Minister to declare the course open.

Hon. Minister, Chief Omo-Osagie:

ANNEX 4

UNITED NATIONS COURSE
ON CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION

Director: Mr. D.J. Allen
Regional Adviser on Customs,
Economic Commission for Africa.

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5. Problems of Customs Administration in West Africa: Geographical, Political and Economic Factors, Preferential systems, National Organizations, Nomenclatures, Rates of Duty, etc.	5
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8. The Public Servant: Rules of Conduct and Discipline	1
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(ii) Discussion on West African Customs Administrations	2
(iii) Departmental Codes of Instructions	1
(iv) Training (General; Executive and Specialist Courses; Maritime and Clerical Courses)	3
10. Custom Laws:	
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(ii) Visits to Court for Customs prosecutions	7
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(ii) Classification Exercise	1

12. International Customs Agreements:	
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13. Commercial Imports by Sea	7
14. Commercial Imports by Road	3
15. Air Freight	2
16. Imports by Post	1
17. Financial Procedures:	
Government Finance, Receipts of Revenue, Payments, Custody of Public Funds, Boards of Survey, Counterfoil Books, Losses of Funds, Revenue Allocation, etc.	4
18. Valuation:	
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19. Customs Regimes:	
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20. Technology:	
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21. Commercial Exports	4
22. Drawback	2
23. The Preventive Service:	
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(ii) Visits to land frontier, airport, ocean terminal	4
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25. Statistics	4
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27. Management:

- (i) Office Function and Supervisor's Job
- (ii) Communications
- (iii) Report Writing
- (iv) Dealing with People
- (v) Effective Speaking
- (vi) Planning
- (vii) Letter Writing
- (viii) Productivity and Industrial Development
- (ix) Work Study in the Office
- (x) Document Flow Charts
- (xi) Office Layout
- (xii) Activity Sampling
- (xiii) Office Equipment and Filing
- (xiv) Budgeting Control
- (xv) Outside Visit
- (xvi) Presentation of Results
- (xvii) Trade Unions
- (xviii) Office Costs

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28. Revision

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29. Test Paper

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30. Course Summary

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