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REPORT OF THE MEETING OF EXPERTS ON
HOUSING PROBLEMS IN AFRICA
(Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 9-17 January 1963)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>
INTRODUCTION	1 -2
I - ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK	3
Attendance	4 -8
Agenda	9
II - ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS	10-26
Housing in Africa: problems and policies	27
(a) Housing needs	28-33
(b) Investment in housing and its financing	34-54
(c) Ways of reducing building costs	55-63
(d) Physical planning	64-67
Technical assistance and Special Funds projects in Africa and activities of other international organizations or non-African countries in the field of housing	68-82
Proposals for a long-term programme of work by ECA on housing, building and physical planning	83
Exhibition "Housing in Africa 1963"	84
General recommendations	85-87

ANNEXES

- I List of participants
- II Agenda
- III Suggestions for a long-term programme of work by ECA on housing and physical planning

INTRODUCTION

1. The first Meeting of Experts on Housing Problems in Africa met in Addis Ababa from 9-17 January 1963 to consider housing problems and policies. The Meeting has its origin in resolution 53(IV) adopted by the fourth session of the Economic Commission for Africa at its 75th plenary meeting on 1 March 1962.

2. The Commission, recognizing the fundamental importance of better housing in Africa, requested the Executive Secretary to convene a conference of experts for the purpose of:

- (a) Exchanging views on the present housing situation and the action so far taken on it;
- (b) Defining as clearly as possible housing problems, their scope, and the requirements for their solution;
- (c) Suggesting the general measures to be taken, with special reference to the national administrative bodies most useful and fit to facilitate the framing and implementation of housing policies;
- (d) Proposing to the Commission the organizational arrangements most suitable to ensure that housing problems shall be regularly and continuously studied within the Commission.

I. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK

3. The Meeting opened in Africa Hall, Addis Ababa, with a welcome address by His Excellency Ato Zawde Gebre-Heywot, Kantiba of Addis Ababa, (Lord Mayor). The Officer-in-Charge of ECA spoke on behalf of the Executive Secretary and delivered his good wishes to the Meeting.

Attendance

4. Representatives of the following countries were present at the Meeting: Burundi, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Sierra Leone, Republic of South Africa, Tanganyika, United Kingdom.
5. Present also were representatives of the following organizations: International Labour Office (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO) and The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
6. Observers from Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, the USA, USSR, the Secretariat des missions d'urbanisme et d'habitat (SMUH) and the Centre d'information du batiment (CIB) were also present.
7. A list of participants is given in annex I of this report.
8. Mr. R. J. Olu Wright (Sierra Leone) and Mr. Kouassi-Goly (Ivory Coast) were unanimously elected Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Meeting respectively.

Agenda

9. The proposed agenda prepared by the secretariat was adopted and is given in annex II to this report.

II. ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

10. The addresses and statements made by His Excellency Ato Zawde Gebre-Heywot and the representative of the Executive Secretary are summarized below.
11. H.E. Ato Zawde Gebre-Heywot welcomed the delegates, and traced the development of the process of urbanization from primitive times, when man fended for himself, up to the world of today, which has all the advantages of co-operation and specialization.

12. He went on to note that housing for the urban dweller was to be the main concern of the conference, the problems of the rural dweller being neither the same nor so urgently in need of solution at the present time. He stressed the importance of planning in meeting the needs of the urban dweller, in order to improve conditions after centuries of haphazard building, and maintain a high standard of construction planning both in the conception of the houses and in their siting. Housing development and town planning were therefore closely related.

13. Africa was in the happy position of being able to learn from the mistakes made in the past by the countries of other continents; to avoid repeating these mistakes and to take full advantage of the situation, it was essential to have effective control of housing development. There was often, through misunderstanding, a certain opposition to planning control; however, well-organized development could be but beneficial to landowners and public alike.

14. The perpetual problem was financing. Funds were never unlimited and municipal programmes should always be drawn up in accordance with the funds available. In order to maintain uniformity of standards, authorized municipal control of private development was essential.

15. His Excellency then thanked the Economic Commission for Africa for organizing the conference and expressed the belief that it would be the forerunner of other such conferences, all leading to better understanding and closer bonds of friendship between the countries represented. He was certain that the conference, in view of the many facets of the subject, would be most interesting and, in conclusion, reiterated his wishes for its success and his words of welcome to the delegates.

16. Mr. A. F. Ewing, Officer-in-Charge, and Director of the Industry, Transport and Natural Resources Division, also welcomed the delegates on behalf of Mr. Robert Gardiner, the Executive Secretary, who was still retained in Congo by his important functions there. It is expected that Mr. Gardiner will resume his office at the fifth session of the Commission

to be held in Leopoldville in February. Mr. Ewing thanked His Excellency Ato Zawde Gebre-Heywot for his encouraging words of welcome and stressed the importance of the work which the delegates were gathered to perform.

17. He referred to the previous activities of ECA in the field of housing and mentioned in particular the Workshop on Self-Help Housing held in Tunis in 1961 and the Workshop on Urbanization held in Addis Ababa in 1962, as well as other activities in the field of self-help housing which had been for the time being undertaken as part of the community development programme.

18. He then proceeded to outline the purpose of the meeting as stated in paragraph 2 above. The meeting, he said, could have a far-reaching significance in building up a new major sector in ECA's work programme. He referred to the setting up of the New Housing, Building and Planning Section within the Division of Industry, Transport and Natural Resources, which would be responsible to carry out the recommended programme in close co-operation with other divisions of the ECA secretariat.

19. He stressed that the secretariat documents were only presented as a guide for discussion by the experts and invited them to look at them critically. He welcomed the participation of the specialized agencies, thanked them for their contribution and looked forward to a greater co-operation among all concerned.

20. He referred also to the establishment last summer of a Housing, Building and Planning Committee by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as a manifestation of the growing emphasis of the United Nations activities in this field. The first meeting of the Committee was scheduled in New York from 21 January to 1 February 1963 and it was hoped that the recommendations of the group of experts could be examined by the Committee.

21. He emphasized that while it was important to adopt a long-term programme, it was essential to concentrate the first efforts on a limited range of issues. This should lead to immediate practical results, and

assist member governments in defining realistic housing policy and investment priorities, in elaborating and implementing adequately phased housing programmes, in setting up the necessary structures. He also referred to the emphasis to be laid on aided self-help and on the development of production of local building materials.

22. On a point of order, Ghana asked to be informed of the decision of the ECOSOC with regard to the recommendation of ECA at its fourth session that the Republic of South Africa be deprived of membership of ECA and added that Ghana would not ordinarily wish to participate in a meeting attended by representatives of the Republic of South Africa.

23. Mr. Ewing, for the Executive Secretary, noted that ECA at its fourth session had recommended to the ECOSOC that the Republic of South Africa be deprived of membership of ECA "until it shall set a term to its policy of racial discrimination" and that the ECOSOC had considered the recommendation at the 34th session both in July and again at its resumed session late in 1962. The ECOSOC had not accepted the recommendation and membership of ECA therefore remained unchanged in this respect. If further recommendations were to be made from ECA they should be made at the fifth session due to convene in Leopoldville on 18 February 1963.

24. The Chairman said that in his view the matter could not be resolved at the present meeting; he suggested that as professionals the participants could well continue with the work before them and he hoped that political discussions would be avoided.

25. Nigeria, associating itself with Ghana, asked that the discussion be placed in the record but stated the delegation of Nigeria would remain if no political discussions arose. Tanganyika and Liberia associated themselves with this statement. Burundi suggested that a more pleasant atmosphere would be created if Ghana withdrew his question and, consequently, asked Ghana to do so. The Ivory Coast supported the Ghana proposal and agreed with the view expressed by the other speakers with the exception of

Burundi. Ethiopia agreed that the meeting, as one of experts, could well continue on condition that political questions were excluded.

26. The Chairman stated that the report would include an account of the discussion together with the names of the delegations taking part in it.

Housing in Africa: Problems and Policies

27. The secretariat then introduced the main paper (E/CN.14/HOU/PA/3) as a basis for discussion. The discussion of the different headings was undertaken separately as summarized below.

(a) Housing Needs

28. The discussion first dealt with how to determine housing needs. The delegates agreed that, until the needs were known, it was impossible to formulate long-term housing policies and programmes. It was acknowledged that surveys to determine the needs would be sufficient if, in the beginning, they resulted in general estimates. In particular it was stressed that the undertaking of surveys should never prevent current building from being continued. Several delegates made a point of stating that surveys to determine needs were particularly useful when it was intended to request foreign aid; similarly it was emphasized that, in view of the low level of available resources, it was particularly important to have sufficient information to determine priorities.

29. Some representatives indicated the estimates that had been made in their countries; it would seem that in some cases the present efforts were sufficient to satisfy only about one-third of the estimated needs. However, it would seem that in most countries surveys of needs were still to be made. It might be useful if the countries where such estimates had been made informed other member countries about their methods. With regard to the survey methods, several countries indicated that it would be useful to have, first, a model, and secondly, some assistance from ECA to undertake such investigation.

30. In defining housing needs, it was stressed that such needs should be interpreted in a wide sense, thus they should include, besides housing proper, all other additional facilities, i.e. sanitary facilities, roads, schools, health centres, and sites for various social activities. The questions of the various needs and the standards to be adopted were also discussed. It was agreed that objective standards should be set, but that the very size of the problems raised was such that these standards would for a long time remain a target to be attained. Within these desirable standards, it would then be advisable to determine the minimum standards which could be attained at present, bearing the possibilities in mind. It was also proposed that suggestions should be made for the definition of maximum standards and for the methods of control needed to apply them, so as to avoid having the available public financial resources used for luxury housing.

31. There was a discussion on the relation between quantitative and qualitative needs. While most delegates stressed that the quantitative problems were very urgent, it was also agreed that the quantity of housing supplied was meaningless if the dwellings did not meet minimum requirements as to quality, the absolute minimum being constituted by the need to build houses meant to last over a period at least equivalent to that required for a reasonable amortization of invested funds. It was also stated that, in some cases, problems of quality might be the most urgent in dwellings where sanitary conditions were particularly bad; in such cases it would be advisable to give immediate priority to the improvement of those conditions.

32. Regarding detailed estimates of needs, it was generally agreed that the three following main categories of housing needs could be distinguished: large urban centres, small and medium-sized towns, and rural areas. It was suggested that one effective way of slowing down the inordinate expansion of large centres would be to pay due attention to the planning of small and medium-sized urban centres.

33. With regard to the development of small and medium-sized towns; it was pointed out that the cost of urban services and community facilities in these was less than in the large towns; in one case the difference was 1 : 2. Moreover, the development of medium-sized centres helped to decrease the transport time between the place of work and residence.

(b) Investment in Housing and its Financing

34. The economic aspects of housing and related services were examined exhaustively. Great emphasis was laid throughout the discussion on the main problem facing all developing countries, i.e. the gap between the needs for adequate housing and the financial means available to satisfy these needs. The discussion was centred around a few essential aspects of this problem, in particular the share of housing in total national investment, the full utilization of all financial means available at a national level, and the possibility of resorting to external financial aid to supplement national resources.

35. While recognizing that the major difficulties to be faced in order to solve the housing problem had a striking similarity among the majority of African countries, the discussion revealed that certain countries had reached different stages in their attempt at solving them. In some countries serious efforts had been made in order to reduce construction costs, notably through rationalization of house designs and layouts or the use of local building materials or the simplification of building practices and operations on site, and it was felt that the main bottleneck was essentially financial. In other countries there appeared to be wide scope for developing better methods of using available resources in skill, labour, materials or even financing.

36. The suggestion was made that the secretariat should collect from a number of countries data on the actual investment in housing and related services, and relate them to national income as well as to total national investment. Such information would throw light on the efforts devoted in

different countries to solving the urgent housing problem, and place the crucial question of house financing in the framework of over-all economic development policies.

37. It was stressed that in their development plans the African countries should give housing -- without speaking of "absolute priority" -- the place it deserves; it was noted that good housing conditions contribute to economic progress; well located dwellings and improved urban services are elements likely to favour the mobility, sanitary welfare and productivity of the active population. On the other hand, better housing is a concrete proof of national progress.

38. On the other hand, several delegations stressed the close relationship between housing and industrialization, especially in view of the development of building materials industries being one of the important elements of industrialization.

39. It was noted that the existing methods of housing policy were often found to be unsuitable for the solution of problems currently raised, particularly as the low-income classes of the population were not in a position to pay the rent for housing at the usual prices when this meant devoting to rent a proportion of their wages ranging from 20 to 25 per cent. From this observation there followed a need to work out and implement new programmes better adapted to the needs they had to meet.

40. In this connexion reference was made by several delegations to the appropriate relationship between the cost of housing and its related services, on the one hand, and the income of the household on the other. There appeared to be scope for further study of this very important question, especially with regard to the possibility of defining standards which would take into account the composition of the household and its capacity to afford the economic rent of a dwelling unit of an acceptable quality. The suggestion was made that the experience of selected African

countries should be usefully exchanged and the secretariat was invited to include this subject in its programme of work.

41. Much attention was devoted to the implementation of low and medium cost housing programmes by central government departments and, more generally, by public authorities and non-profit making institutions. Emphasis was laid on the sources of financing, both public and private; on the possibility of obtaining short and long-term loans; on the question of providing adequate security for mortgages, for instance through government guaranteed loans; etc. The discussion of general principles was adequately illustrated by numerous examples derived from the experience of participating countries.

42. The problem of the planning and developing of the site, including not only roads, water supply, electricity and sanitation facilities, but also community facilities such as schools, social centres, clinics, public health centres, sport grounds and playgrounds, buildings of worship, shops, etc. was extensively considered in the light of the experience of several countries. Examples of the cost of this kind of development were given and of the factors likely to affect the cost, in particular the layout of buildings, the density of occupation of the site, the health or security standards, the size of the settlements, their relative distances, etc. Examples were quoted of a differential distribution of the costs of community facilities and services as between the different categories of housing, within the context of attempts to set up residential units comprising all socio-economic groups. Finally an example was mentioned in which costs were determined not by dwelling unit but by unit of developed area.

43. The problems of the clearance of slums and shanty towns from the large urban built-up areas, on the one hand, and of the improvement of rural housing on the other hand, were brought up several times. It appeared necessary to deal with these problems on the national level, laying special emphasis on the relation between the need to improve rural housing

and to provide employment facilities in order to slow down as far as possible the rural exodus which is one of the main causes, together with chronic urban under-employment, of the creation of shanty towns.

44. Still within the context of economic considerations, the means of mobilizing domestic financial resources more effectively were discussed. First of all, while it was obvious that the low level of income restricted the possibilities of saving, it was nevertheless true that, given a policy of austerity, it might frequently be possible to ask the higher-income groups of the population to make a greater contribution through suitable tax systems. Secondly, it was suggested that specific indirect taxes, for example on certain imported commodities, might also provide funds for building construction. Thirdly, reference was made to an experiment where, by constituting residential units to include all social groups, the cost of housing at moderate rents was partly subsidized by the tenants of the more expensive buildings. Lastly, and more generally, it was to be expected that the increased national income resulting from overall development programmes would extend the opportunities for domestic financing.

45. A discussion arose on the experience of some countries where financing by tender had been resorted to, the contractor having, for example, the responsibility of finding the necessary funds. It was noted that this method was usually an expensive one for raising funds for housing. Other suggestions were made to the effect that the possibilities of financing should be explored by insurance companies, pension funds, provident funds, national housing insurance programmes, etc.

46. In turning next to the problem of financing by foreign aid, whether bilateral or international, it was recognized that in any case this type of aid could only reasonably be requested after all the possible means of using and developing local resources had been exhausted. Emphasis was placed, inter alia, on the following pre-conditions of foreign financing: more specific knowledge of total needs, the formulation of a general policy

on housing and physical planning, the preparation and launching of short and long-term programmes, and the setting up of essential administrative and technical structures for effectively carrying out these programmes.

47. It was pointed out that experience showed that financing by foreign capital was all the more effective when it was related to specific projects, within the context of well-defined programmes; such financing was seldom provided to satisfy the over-all housing needs of a country.

48. More generally, it was noted that three different types of foreign financing could be distinguished. It could take the form of (1) loans repayable in foreign currency; (2) loans repayable in local currency; and (3) outright grants.

49. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was suggested as a possible provider of loans of the first category. The Bank's policy is the following: the loans it provides must be for productive purposes; the Bank financing, except in special circumstances, must be designed to meet foreign exchange rather than local currency needs and housing construction involves primarily local currency expenditures and relatively small direct foreign exchange costs. Consequently, as far as Bank participation in housing development is concerned, the first test of any project to be financed by the Bank is its productivity. The relation of housing development to increased productivity is, according to the Bank, most apparent in cases where housing development is an integral part of a directly productive project, for example, workers housing for an industrial plant. In some cases, the most effective and economic way of stimulating housing may be by way of investment in basic industries, such as steel, power, transport and the like, which can support an active building industry. Nevertheless, it was pointed out that even though it were possible to obtain foreign currency loans they might be inadvisable, since the foreign currency that would have to be used for capital refund and interest payments might be already committed in carrying out the economic development programme.

50. The second type of foreign loans, i.e. loans repayable in local currency, was much more suitable for housing purposes since there was no problem for the borrower to repay the loan in foreign currency. However, it was unlikely that the whole of the capital needs for housing could be covered by this type of loans. In this respect it was stressed that in countries where certain building materials do not exist it would probably be easier to obtain loans in the form of the supply of such materials; but some delegates pointed out that in that case the cost of the materials was considerably increased by the transport costs.

51. Lastly, with regard to grants, while they might be expected to increase, they might tend to take the form of building materials. This type of international financial assistance was particularly suitable for shanty town clearance programmes and for the promotion of building research.

52. Attention was also drawn to the \$100 million food fund established by the Food and Agriculture Organization to help finance capital formation in developing countries. The advantage of this type of capital assistance was that it helped to obviate the dangers of inflation resulting from expanding investment programmes. Furthermore, this type of foreign aid could be linked with the programmes for the absorption of under-employment, as workers could be partially remunerated in kind.

53. The secretariat was strongly urged to make a thorough study of the possible sources and methods of international financial aid, both bilateral and multilateral, which might be directed towards the building of houses, the development of building sites, sanitation and water supply, the establishment of development of a building materials industry, the training of manpower, the improvement of productivity and, more generally, applied research in housing and building construction. A memorandum giving information on that subject should be drawn up in consultation with the competent bodies and addressed to the member governments.

54. In a second stage, studies should be devoted to working out an overall policy in this field and to determining the order of priority of foreign assistance, bearing in mind in particular needs and conditions of the countries concerned.

(c) Ways of Reducing Building Costs

55. Since there were several possible uses of the same volume of financial resources, a discussion took place on the means of making most effective use of the available resources, that is to say more specifically on the means of reducing building costs. The scope for considerable progress in this matter was emphasized in the comments made by several delegations in confirmation of certain estimates in the secretariat memorandum, from which it was clear that the cost of an economic dwelling varied considerably from country to country. In some countries the cost of a housing unit was about five times the annual wage of an average building worker, while in others it had been reduced to an amount equal to his annual wage.

56. In connexion with the ways of reducing costs, it was first suggested that the secretariat should undertake to collect data in order to submit to member countries a detailed paper on the various means, existing and potential, as they emerge from the experience of various countries; furthermore the need was stressed for continuous action in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on the subject. Special emphasis was placed on the need for carrying out an analytical study of the cost structure of economic dwellings as built in a number of countries; a comparison and study of differences in the relative importance of various cost elements according to the country were in fact a way of highlighting the places where a reduction in costs might be possible.

57. Three simultaneous methods of reducing costs were explored: a more effective use of local materials and the local production of materials hitherto imported; a more effective use of the labour force; and housing designs better adapted to the specific conditions of African countries. It was stressed that one of the ways of making progress in these three spheres was the development of applied research on housing and the exchange of experience among countries.

58. First of all the discussion dealt with building materials, which in some cases constituted as much as 75 per cent of total housing costs. Because of that high proportion, special attention should be paid to that question. It was noted that the prices of certain materials in Africa were more than twice those in the industrialized countries, owing to the fact that those materials were imported. A first means of reducing costs would seem, therefore, to be to expand and improve the production in Africa itself of basic building materials presently imported. Full use should be made of the existing production capacity through the development of co-operation between neighbouring countries; in this connexion it was noted that the new industries should be planned preferably in a sub-regional perspective, so that they could more easily reach an economic threshold through a fairly wide market. Secondly, emphasis should be placed on the use of local materials; some examples were given showing that it would often be possible to make use of extremely abundant local materials resources that had remained untapped. Lastly, the possibility was considered of instituting or developing prefabrication of building components, provided that large-scale building programmes had been launched and that the dwelling types to be produced had been rationalized as much as possible. It was commented that foreign aid might be sought for launching activities such as those mentioned above, and that projects of that type fell within the scope of international financial institutions like the International Bank or the United Nations Special Fund.

59. In connexion with the most effective use of manpower, a question dealt with by several delegations, there seemed to be little information on quantitative and qualitative needs in that field; it was hoped that investigations would be undertaken on that subject. One of the first means of improving labour productivity was obviously to raise the level of skills and to devote special attention to the training of supervisory staff; the need for more training centres was stressed by all the delegations expressing views on the subject. Secondly, more effective use of the labour force could be obtained if the architects and technical personnel in general made a closer study of the various problems of organizing work on the building site; in particular, if the building methods were simplified, it would be possible to make better use of unskilled labour. Training courses in management for contractors would also be a way of reducing costs.

60. Thirdly, it was acknowledged that the cost of building could be appreciably reduced if efforts were devoted to the study of more realistic standards of low-cost housing. Reference was made to some experiences, for example the reduction of ceiling heights and of wall thicknesses, which had shown that it was sometimes feasible to reduce unit costs considerably without thereby lowering the quality of the dwelling. It was suggested that building regulations should be revised wherever they prevented an effective reduction in costs.

61. It was also stated that the diversity in housing standards within a group of countries, or even within the same country, created a situation that made it difficult for an efficient housing policy adapted to the available means, to be worked out. For a suitable definition of standards it is essential to consider the fundamental requirements relating to human needs, which can be called functional requirements. Among these, those concerning security and health are absolute, while those concerning comfort can be graded to a certain extent provided that a minimum level is maintained. When applied to the properties of building elements, functional requirements

give rise to quality standards. Quality standards, therefore, cannot be lowered below a minimum threshold without thereby jeopardizing the functional requirements from which they are derived.

62. All delegates emphasized the fundamental importance of research in every sphere that had been considered. The development of research appeared everywhere to be the means of achieving the necessary and considerable reduction in costs through the use of local materials, the establishment of industries producing materials hitherto imported, the definition of housing standards, building standards and techniques (including the possibility of using the sound elements of traditional techniques), and finally the training of staff.

63. In this connexion it was noted that at present the French-speaking African countries had no research centre of their own. It was suggested that the possibility of setting up sub-regional centres, one of which would be concerned with the countries of West Africa, should be closely studied. It was stressed that there was a need for co-operation probably under the auspices of the ECA, among the existing centres and those to be set up. When their research had led to usable economic results, those centres could promote industries, at least pilot industries; they might also include vocational training facilities.

(d) Physical Planning

64. The meeting felt that the general aspects of physical planning as outlined in document E/CN.14/HOUPA/8 could not be adequately and usefully discussed in a meeting of this kind. While it was recognized that physical planning in its relationship to national economic development plans, on the one side, and to housing programmes, on the other, was an essential aspect of government policies, and should be given an adequate place in the terms of reference of the Committee or Working Party to be set up with the ECA; it was felt, however, that at this stage discussion should be restricted only to those physical planning considerations relating directly to housing.

65. Some of the delegates referred to previous consultations on housing and planning held under the aegis of ECA and in particular to the Workshop on low-cost housing and related community facilities, held in Tunis in October 1961, and the Workshop on Urbanization in Africa, held in Addis Ababa in April 1962. It was felt that the reports of the meetings referred to above should be widely circulated and their recommendations in the field of physical planning should be taken into account when considering the terms of reference and the long term programme of work of ECA in the field of housing, building and planning.

66. The need for co-ordinating physical planning with national economic and social policies was stressed, at all levels but particularly within the framework of regional planning development. While only a few countries have so far introduced effectively such co-ordination, it was noted that this approach to physical planning was gaining ground and had already influenced the organizational framework of national agencies. In this connexion it was felt that a study should be made of the countries where such policies had been implemented in order to ascertain their effectiveness. France was specifically mentioned as a country in which national physical planning had been undertaken with a considerable success.

67. Several suggestions were made as to possible subjects for international co-operation in the field of physical planning, within the broad terms of reference of the permanent organ to be set up within the Commission; those which were retained are included in the detailed programme of work attached as Annex III to the present report.

Technical Assistance and Special Fund Projects in Africa and Activities of other International Organizations or Non-African Countries in the field of Housing

68. There was considerable discussion on these two items; the representative for the United Nations Technical Assistance and the Special

Fund, the representatives of FAO, WHO and ILO, the representatives of France and the United Kingdom, and the observers from Belgium, the United States of America, Sweden, SMUH, and CIB, gave an account both of past and present activities undertaken by their organizations and the prospects they opened up for the African countries. The representatives of the international organizations further submitted memoranda on their activities to the Meeting. These memoranda will be reproduced in the document to be published by the secretariat at a later stage.

69. The statement of the activity of FAO gave rise to a discussion on problems of training of householders in relation to housing. It was considered important to take into account the special needs of the occupants when designing dwelling units; at the same time stress was laid on the role of housing in the improvement of the standard of living, and that of education of the families in the improvement and maintenance of their dwellings. The secretariat should undertake to assemble documentation and to promote research on the sociology of housing. It was pointed out that experience already accumulated in this field in other continents should be used; the collaboration of the research centres envisaged at another stage of the discussion would be required. FAO indicated that it would be willing to assist.

70. The statement by the FAO representative and the discussion to which it gave rise also provided an opportunity for the suggestion that the FAO Forestry Division should assist the ECA, within the context of research on the better utilization of local building materials.

71. The ILO representative introduced a detailed report on his organization's activity in Africa. The discussion following that statement dealt mainly with manpower needs, both qualitative and quantitative. Once again the decisive importance of developing vocational training was emphasized, and the ILO agreed to supply the member countries, through the

secretariat, with information on the assistance it was giving in this field. The ILO representative also expressed agreement with a proposal that his organization and the ECA should collaborate on a survey of manpower needs in the building industry. The ILO representative stressed his organization's interest in regional housing centres, and expressed the hope that the relations between the ILO and any centres that might be established in Africa would become increasingly close. Lastly, the ILO indicated its intention to strengthen the co-operation between its regional office at Dar-es-Salaam and ECA.

72. The WHO representative gave an account of his organization's activities in various African countries in connexion with housing in the widest sense, particularly with regard to the relation between housing and health. The experience of WHO in fields such as pure water supply, refuse disposal and environmental sanitation in general was highlighted, and also the collaboration which that organization is ready to provide to member countries, to research centres and to the ECA. The importance of health improvement programmes was underlined by the observation that the slums and shanty towns could not be expected to be eliminated immediately; it was stressed that the task of sanitarians was not so much to launch vast projects involving civil engineering work, but rather to show residents in unhealthy districts how to improve sanitary conditions rapidly by their own efforts. Lastly, WHO and its three regional offices concerned with African countries were ready to co-operate with the ECA in the fields related to housing, both with regard to improving present conditions and to establishing health standards for future housing.

73. Following these statements and the discussions to which they gave rise, it was suggested that the activities of the three organizations in the housing field should be co-ordinated to the greatest possible extent; in particular, it was requested that these organizations should regularly send the secretariat information on their activities, their projects and

the results obtained in the housing field. The representatives of FAO, WHO and ILO agreed.

74. As a conclusion to the discussion on the Technical Assistance and Special Fund activities in Africa in the housing field, the secretariat was invited to obtain all the reports prepared by UN experts concerning African countries, so that it could extract from those reports the considerations of general interest and circulate to member countries a consolidated report.

75. In general, in view of (a) the vast quantity of documents produced both by the international organizations and by the existing national and sub-regional research centres in the fields of activity of interest to housing in the broad sense, (b) the desirability of avoiding duplication of work, (c) the need to ensure that the most effective possible use is made of that work, the wish was expressed that the secretariat should undertake the responsibility of assembling all that documentation in one place, and that it should disseminate it to each of the member countries. In order to ensure reliable liaison, it was proposed that a "correspondent" should be appointed for each of the member countries, who would be responsible for receiving and using the international documentation made available by the secretariat.

76. The representative of France sketched an overall picture of the technical and financial means by which his country co-operated in the assistance to African states. On the technical level that contribution was provided both at the survey stage and at that of the implementation of projects. It consisted essentially of sending experts or advisers, while the training and perfecting of African specialists through the organization of courses and seminars were favoured. With regard to the financial means placed at the disposal of the African countries, the representative of France indicated that since 1959 an important part of that aid had been supplied through the Fonds d'aide et de cooperation (FAC) which had

replaced FIDES as far as Africa was concerned; since the end of the Second World War, it was estimated that about one-quarter of the total financial aid had been devoted to housing. Moreover France was participating in the five-year programme of the Fonds europeen de developpment des pays d'outre mer (FEDOM).

77. The U.K. delegate mentioned briefly the kind of technical aid which Britain gives to the African countries, particularly in the fields of housing and planning. Aid is given either bilaterally - country-to-country - or multilaterally, through international organizations. Bilateral aid goes mainly to independent members of the Commonwealth, to British dependent territories and to some countries with which Britain has close associations. Multilateral aid is given in the form of contributions to the United Nations. The Department of Technical Co-operation (DTC) is the agency for British technical aid. It is appropriately named: technical aid is given as part of a co-operative effort with the receiving countries, and sometimes in partnership with other givers. Technical aid is not necessarily financial or capital. Britain, of course, continues to help developing countries in this way, but not normally through the DTC. The technical aid scheme for Africa is known as the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP). The plan includes capital and technical aid for independent Commonwealth countries in Africa and for the dependent territories. Technical aid in the field of housing and planning research is provided by the tropical divisions of the UK Building Research Station and Road Research Laboratory. The Building Research Unit is in contact with most countries in the tropics and information is freely circulated to housing and planning authorities and to others concerned with these matters. The unit also assists in the training courses in tropical design, which are given at the Department of Tropical Studies of the Architectural Association, London.

78. The observer from Belgium first stated that it was not his intention to present a complete description of his country's activity in the field

covered by the Meeting, but he referred to the establishment of a governmental body to foster aid for development and of a non-governmental institute for technical aid in which the principal specialized consultants participate. He promised to send the secretariat a detailed memorandum on that subject, and requested that it should be circulated to member countries. On another aspect, the observer from Belgium, referring to his experience in the Housing Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe, recalled an experiment made by that committee that might be of use to African countries. The ECE Housing Committee had been dealing with development programmes intended for the least industrialized countries of Europe, and missions, whose expenses were paid by the industrialized countries providing the experts, had visited some industrially developing European countries to make a survey of the housing needs and of the means available to solve the housing question, with a view to the conclusion with industrialized countries of technical co-operation agreements ranging from the training of manpower to the setting up of building materials plants, in close co-operation with the specialized agencies of the United Nations. He stressed the usefulness of this kind of mission: the inviting countries were clearly documented on the possibilities offered by the industrialized countries; while the latter, being in possession of a complete diagnosis, had a better understanding of what their intervention was to accomplish. In conclusion, he stated that he would propose to the ECE Housing Committee in June 1963 that a small mission should be sent to those African countries that might wish it.

79. The programme of the United States of America has been large overall but the area of housing has just begun, in recent years, to come into any magnitude in relation to the overall programme. Shortage, or rather lesser amounts, of assistance in the field of housing have been due to lack of technicians and lack of concentration in this field. New arrangements have now been made with US Federal Agencies to provide technical support,

personnel, facilities and training. Also with the absorption into AID (Agency for International Development) of the DLF (Development Loan Fund), and with the increased concentration on housing, the availability of development loans to housing efforts such as co-operatives, savings and loan associations and credit unions will be increased. The Act for International Development (1961) requires the AID Administrator, in providing technical assistance in housing, to utilize to the fullest extent practicable, the facilities and resources of federal agencies having primary responsibilities for the domestic programmes. This means, in at least one case, the Housing and Home Finance Agency. It is from this Agency that new support comes in the way of technicians, facilities, training. The kinds of assistance additional to technical assistance are development loans, development grants and investment guarantees. US assistance in the field of housing has operated in the form of survey teams, studies, low cost and aided self-help housing programmes; architectural engineering and planning programmes, consultations and evaluations, loans, grants and training.

80. The observer from the SMUH said that his organization was an association comprising four categories of members: the relevant French ministries, those states who wished to belong; specialized technical and financial bodies; and lastly, a number of experts. SMUH was a non-profit making organization; it was to be regarded as a "reinforcement" which could be called upon when it was needed. Its activities, which were set out in a pamphlet circulated to the delegates, consisted of four main points: (a) organization of training courses, (b) assistance in the preparation of documents on requests for loans from FAC and FEDOM, (c) sending of experts to countries that requested it and (d) organization of missions on the spot to examine the problems of housing and physical planning. Lastly, the representative of SMUH said that he agreed with the delegates who had expressed the hope that ECA would co-ordinate activities in those fields so as to avoid duplication of work.

81. The observer from Sweden stated that 60 per cent of the financial resources that his country allocated to international development was channelled through the United Nations; the second part of that aid was supplied by the Swedish Agency for International Assistance. There was also some aid in the form of long-term loans; and, lastly, some private Swedish groups had invested in African countries. In the specific field of housing in Africa, he drew attention to the document circulated to delegates on the Ethio-Swedish Institute of Building Technology. In general Swedish aid tended fundamentally to favour basic programmes, for example on nutrition and health, family planning and vocational training; schools had been built to assist in carrying out those projects. Fellowships were awarded to Africans who came to Sweden in order to specialize in housing. A one-year course had just started at Stockholm, the purpose of which was to train persons responsible for production and consumption co-operatives. Co-operative societies and trade unions were particularly active in that field.

82. The Principal of the Ethio-Swedish Institute of Building Technology, attending in an observer capacity, was invited by the Chairman to make a statement on the role of the International Council for Building Research Studies and Documentation (CIB) of which the Institute is a full member. He recalled the origin of CIB, created in 1953 under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Europe, and its membership comprising the institutes of housing and building research and documentation of practically all countries in the world. He referred also to the method of work of CIB, through its specialized working groups, its periodic congresses devoted to a broad subject of knowledge, its efforts to disseminate the results of research and its close collaboration with other international organizations and in particular with the United Nations (CIB hold consultative status to the Economic and Social Council under category B). With particular reference to the needs of rapidly developing African countries, mention was made of the recent setting up of a working group to study the problems

of indoor climate in hot countries. The CIB is prepared to assist all countries in assessing their research needs in the fields of its competence to help establishing national centres for housing and building research and documentation, and to collaborate with regional and sub-regional centres.

Proposals for a Long-term Programme of Work by ECA on Housing, Building and Physical Planning

83. The Meeting devoted considerable time to a close examination of the note prepared by the secretariat (E/CN.14/HOUPA/5) with suggestions for a long-term programme of work by ECA and organizational arrangements within the ECA in the field of housing, building and physical planning. Several suggestions were also made on specific projects to be undertaken by the secretariat, within the framework of the proposed terms of reference of the permanent organ to be set up within the Commission and in close collaboration with experts and rapporteurs to be designated by participating countries. The final text of the recommendations to the Fifth session of the Commission in response to operative paragraph 1 (d) of resolution 53(IV) concerning the terms of reference outline a long-term programme of work and a list of specific projects to be undertaken and is contained in annex I. The Meeting also considered a suitable order of priorities among the subjects and formulated suggestions to the secretariat in this respect.

Exhibition "Housing in Africa 1963"

84. The secretariat made an announcement on the purpose and scope of the exhibition "Housing in Africa 1963" to be held in Addis Ababa; the exhibition will be organized under the aegis of ECA and in collaboration with the Ethio-Swedish Institute of Building Technology on the occasion of the first meeting of the proposed committee on housing and physical planning scheduled for December 1963. It was agreed that the secretariat would, at a later stage, invite governments to contribute with documentary material according to a common outline and a detailed programme to ensure the maximum possible uniformity of presentation.

General Recommendations

85. Apart from the views expressed under the different items of the agenda and summarized in the preceding paragraphs of the present report, and of the formal recommendation to the fifth session of the Commission contained in annex III, the Meeting expressed the desire to formulate a number of general recommendations to the ECA on various aspects of international collaboration in housing, building and physical planning.

86. The Meeting recommended that:

- (a) the secretariat should centralize and disseminate among member countries information on housing, building and physical planning problems, with particular reference to the results and the application of research, exchange of experience on all the subjects listed in the outline of its long-term programme of work and in general on all matters within its terms of reference;
- (b) The secretariat should circulate information available on aided self-help projects in Africa, and in particular ensure the widest possible circulation of the report prepared on this subject by a United Nations Technical Assistance expert; the secretariat should also include the subject of aided self-help on the agenda of the first meeting of the proposed committee on housing and physical planning;
- (c) The ECA should encourage the establishment of regional or sub-regional centres on housing and building research and documentation in Africa; the secretariat should in particular and within its competence facilitate the co-ordination and dissemination of published information on housing and building research, in close co-operation with the CIB and its African member institutes;

- (d) ECA should convene a meeting to consider physical planning in relation to the specific problems of rapidly developing African countries with a view to establishing on a firmer basis a programme for physical planning in Africa as a whole;
- (e) ECA, within the framework of comprehensive studies of the economic geography of African countries, should carry out or sponsor such surveys as will be necessary to permit the elaboration and the implementation of national and regional physical plan;
- (f) The secretariat should collaborate with the relevant international organizations in collecting and circulating suitable material and assist in the training of families (particularly housewives), concerning the maintenance and rational use of the house and its facilities.

87. The final text of the present report and of its annexes has been approved by the Meeting.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Vice Chairman: M. M. KOUASSI-GOLY (Ivory Coast)
Secretary of the meeting: Mr. C.S. UMEADI

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ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening addresses
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Housing in Africa : problems and policies
5. Proposals for a long-term programme of work by the ECA on housing, building and town planning
6. Technical assistance and Special Fund projects in Africa
7. Activities of other international organizations or non-African countries in the field of housing in Africa
8. Exhibition "Housing in Africa 1963"
9. Any other business
10. Adoption of the report to the fifth session of ECA

ANNEX III

SUGGESTIONS FOR A LONG-TERM PROGRAMME OF WORK BY
ECA ON HOUSING, BUILDING AND PHYSICAL PLANNING

The Meeting recommended that a committee on housing and physical planning should be established within ECA, with the following terms of reference and programme of work :

A. Terms of Reference

1. The committee on housing and physical planning, acting within the broad framework of policies and subject to the general supervision of the Commission, shall
 - (a) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the improvement of the housing situation, raising the standard of related community facilities, and increasing the efficiency of the building industry;
 - (b) Explore and promote various forms of international financial assistance in the field of housing and physical planning;
 - (c) Make or sponsor investigations, studies and consultations relating to housing, building and physical planning as the Committee deems appropriate;
 - (d) Undertake and sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of data and information concerning the economic, social and technical aspects of housing, building and physical planning;
 - (e) Provide a forum for discussion and the exchange of information and experience on any matters arising from items enumerated under (a) to (c) above.

2. The committee is empowered to make recommendations on any matter within its competence directly to its member governments and to other international organizations.

3. The committee may establish such subsidiary bodies or employ such methods of work as it deems appropriate for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities, including the convening of meetings of working groups of experts or rapporteurs, the preparation of seminars or symposia, and the organizing of study tours.

4. The committee is empowered to invite to its plenary or subsidiary meetings representatives of UN specialized agencies and other specialized organizations to participate in a consultative capacity in the consideration of matters of mutual interest.

5. The committee shall take measures to ensure that close co-operation is maintained with other organs of the United Nations and with the specialized agencies in matters of mutual interest. The committee shall also assist in an advisory capacity in the elaboration and implementation of technical assistance programmes in matters within its competence.

B. Outline of Work Programme

1. Housing Policies and Programmes

- (a) Comprehensive housing policies: purpose, scope, formulation, share of housing in total investment.
- (b) Housing programmes, short and long-term: basic statistical information required, social economic and demographic surveys, inter-relationship with national and regional economic development plans, priorities.

- (c) Financing of housing: sources of capital, public and private investment, subsidies, rent policies, etc.
- (d) Implementation of housing programmes: legislation, organization, housing management.
- (e) Periodic surveys of housing situation: progress, trends and future outlook.
- (f) Better utilization, maintenance and improvement of the dwelling stock.
- (g) Administrative structure and methods: improvement through the application of modern organization techniques.
- (h) Housing co-operatives.

2. Housing projects

- (a) Functional requirements of housing in Africa: climatic considerations, health considerations, social considerations, quality standards.
- (b) Special technical problems of housing in Africa: resistance to termite attack, pest infestation, corrosion, humidity, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.
- (c) Design of low cost housing: review of current designs, type projects, nucleus houses, single- and multi-family accommodation, urban and rural housing, etc.
- (d) Layout of residential units: densities, standards, services and community facilities.
- (e) Formulation, implementation and assessment of demonstration projects.
- (f) Aided self-help housing: problems, methods, special techniques, training.
- (g) Training of householders.

3. Physical Planning

- (a) Planning policies and their implementation: legislation, organization, control.
- (b) Special methodological problems of physical planning in Africa: basic surveys and analyses of data, integration of land use and other resources, new methods for the elaboration and implementation of physical planning projects, administrative and technical machinery.
- (c) Provision of land for planning purposes: land tenure, land uses, land prices.
- (d) Environmental sanitation: water supply, excreta and sewage disposal, refuse treatment and composting (in co-operation with WHO).
- (e) Community facilities and related services (in co-operation with WHO, UNESCO, etc.).
- (f) Urban renewal and slum clearance.

4. Building Industry

- (a) Building materials and components: survey of resources, assessment of future needs, development of local production, research into the use of local materials and the application of new materials, standardization.
- (b) Building organizations: structure, special problems (technical, financial, organizational), specialization, geographical distribution; building co-operatives.
- (c) Building methods and techniques: traditional, conventional, industrialized.
- (d) Building costs: surveys of cost and prices, analysis of factors affecting costs and of means of reducing them, productivity studies.

- (e) Manpower: survey of requirements, training at all levels (architects, engineers, administrators, managers, clerks of works, foremen, skilled operatives), review of current and planned programmes (in co-operation with ILO and UNESCO).

5. Housing and Building Research and Documentation

- (a) Assistance to governments in setting up and/or developing national centres for housing and building research and documentation.
- (b) Creation and development of sub-regional centres for housing and building research and documentation (in co-operation with CIB).
- (c) Co-ordination and dissemination of knowledge and application of research: trend reports, abstracts, etc. (in co-operation with CIB).

6. Co-operation with other Organs of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies and with other International Organizations

- (a) Assistance to governments in formulating requests for and in implementing technical assistance and Special Funds projects.
- (b) Participation in joint projects within the framework of the "concerted programme of international action in the field of housing and related community facilities" approved by ECOSOC and carried out by the UN family, and in particular with the other economic commissions.
- (c) Co-operation with international professional and technical organizations concerned with various aspects of housing, building and town planning.

C. Specific Projects to be undertaken by the Secretariat

1. General Documentation

- + (a) Collect, edit and circulate extracts from reports prepared by technical assistance and Special Fund experts on matters relating to housing, building and physical planning in Africa, in collaboration with UN specialized agencies (ILO, FAO, WHO).
- + (b) Collect and circulate up-to-date information on the principal sources of external financial assistance to housing and physical planning, bilateral, multilateral and international, with particular reference to their scope, the conditions attached, the terms of loans or grants, and other administrative or technical conditions.

2. Housing Policies

- + (a) Propose a model outline for general and detailed surveys of housing needs, based on the experience of selected countries, and with particular reference to the conditions prevailing in rapidly developing African countries.
- (b) Collect information on and compare current standards of low and medium cost housing in selected African countries, with particular reference to minimum enforceable standards and, where applicable, maximum standards connected with public financial assistance (in collaboration with WHO).

+ The projects marked with an asterisk should have a higher priority.

3. Housing Economics

- (a) Collect and analyze information from selected African countries on the importance of total investment devoted to housing and related facilities, both in absolute terms and in relationship to per capita income.
- (b) Collect information on criteria used for relating the size, the cost or the rent of the dwelling to the composition of the household and to the income of the family, with particular reference to public sponsored low cost housing programmes.
- + (c) Collect and analyze on a comparative basis information on the actual cost of dwellings currently built in selected African countries, broken down in such a way as to throw light on the main components of building costs and on the factors likely to affect them.
- (d) Collect and analyze on a comparative basis information on the actual cost of providing essential community services and facilities, expressed in appropriate terms (i.e. cost per hectare, per habitable room, per dwelling unit) and taking into account the standards of such services and facilities (in collaboration with WHO).
- (e) Undertake a study and analysis of co-operative societies having as their objective the production and sale of building materials, as well as the purchase of land and the construction of housing and related community facilities (in collaboration with ILO).

4. Resources

- + (a) Undertake a survey of the present resources of selected basic building materials in Africa, with a view to making recommendations on the more effective utilization of the present

production capacity, on the development and improvement of their production, on the setting up of new industries and on a better co-ordination on a sub-regional level of national investment policies in this respect (in collaboration with FAO).

- (b) Undertake or sponsor a survey of manpower requirements in the building sector, with a view to making recommendations on their more effective utilization and to provide guidance for long-term vocational training and higher education programmes (in collaboration with the ILO, WHO and UNESCO).

5. Physical Planning

- + (a) Undertake a study on the development of methods and techniques suitable to African countries in the elaboration and implementation of physical plans, with particular reference to methods of surveys and analysis and to the integration of all available resources in the establishment of general physical plans.
- (b) Undertake a study to define more precisely the place of physical planning in economic and social development.

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