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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROGRAMME
OF WORK AND PRIORITIES

DRAFT REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROGRAMME
OF WORK AND PRIORITIES

1. The Committee on the Programme of Work and Priorities held its first meeting on Wednesday, 13 February 1963 at the Palais de la Nation, Leopoldville. It had six meetings in all and concluded its work on 16 February.
2. At its first meeting the Committee was attended by twelve members and one associate member. Also present at the first meeting were one observer and one specialized agency. By the last meeting there were twenty-three members, one associate member, three specialized agencies and three observers.
3. In his opening statement, the Executive Secretary drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that he did not believe there was any question of a legal quorum and that the Committee was a gathering of representatives of members and associate members to examine the work programme and its priorities and to express their views to the full session of the Commission.
4. Mr. Doukkali Ahmed (Morocco) was unanimously elected Chairman and it was agreed to postpone the election of the first Vice-Chairman and the second Vice-Chairman until more delegates should arrive. At its second meeting, held on Thursday 14 February, the Committee unanimously elected M. Jean-Pierre Simba (Congo-Leopoldville) as Vice-Chairman. It was agreed, at the Chairman's suggestion, that it was not necessary to elect a second Vice-Chairman.
5. After the Executive Secretary's statement on the major aspects of the Programme of Work and Priorities for 1963-1964 (E/CN.14/230 and Add.1 and Corr.1,2 and 3), the Committee examined the projects one by one and reached the conclusions contained in this report as adopted by the Committee at its last meeting.

I. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

(01) - General Aspects of Development Planning and Policies

6. The secretariat introduced briefly the major projects under this heading. It was indicated that the various projects would be carried out in such a way as to throw light on the main development problems in Africa. One of the delegates congratulated the secretariat on the concise presentation of the work programme in the field of economic and social development. The priorities given to various work projects were fully acceptable. He urged that if there were no major objections, the work programme and priorities be accepted as presented. There was "strong but silent" approval by other delegations of these ideas.

7. There was discussion on the establishment of the African development bank and on the need for co-ordination in the operations of the national development banks, which have been established or are in process of establishment in a number of countries, and of the African development bank. One of the delegations emphasized that such co-ordination need not await the creation of the African development bank. An interim body, working closely with the Executive Secretary and the ECA secretariat, could be called upon to take the preliminary steps towards a fuller co-ordination.

(02) - Social Trends, Problems and Policies

8. In introducing this section of the work programme, the secretariat indicated that an integrated approach to problems of economic and social development had been attempted with a view to avoiding the dichotomy which usually arises when dealing with these problems.

9. Reference was made to projected studies dealing with trends in the social situation such as trends in levels of living, health, education, labour, etc. It was indicated that studies would also be undertaken in changes in social structures, in the emergence of new social groups and in social implications of development programmes, e.g. educational programmes.

10. It was also pointed out that studies in incentives to economic development and in institutional barriers to development would be undertaken. Work on problems of urbanization would also be continued.

(03) - Community Development and Social Welfare

11. Projects in community development and social welfare were also introduced. Specific note was made of studies in the applicability of community development and other methods of mobilizing human resources for economic development in African countries.

12. A question was raised by one delegate who sought clarification about project 03-02. He remarked that when referring to sub-section 03-02, Study of the Applicability of Community Development Techniques to Urban Areas in Africa, the secretariat seemed to have suggested that emphasis hitherto had been laid upon rural areas and that it was now to be transferred to urban areas. In his country, for example, in the past attention had been given chiefly to urban areas but now more emphasis was being laid on rural areas where more wealth was expected to be produced.

13. The secretariat explained that the study to be undertaken was intended to estimate the extent to which the methods and techniques which had originally been developed for rural areas could be fruitfully adapted to urban conditions, as community development had historically been considered relevant only to rural areas.

14. The Chairman concluded the discussion with emphasis on the need to study the problems indicated in the project on the study of the applicability of community development techniques to urban areas.

II. ECONOMIC SURVEYS AND REVIEWS, MONEY AND FINANCE

(11) - Economic Surveys and Reviews and Analyses of Current Economic Trends

(12) - Money and Finance

15. After the projects had been introduced, the question was raised by one delegation of the possibility of having contributions by Member States published in the Economic Bulletin for Africa. This, it was said, would give the governments of Member States an opportunity to express their views on economic and social problems and policies and it might particularly contribute to the future activities of the African development institute and the various research institutes in Africa. The representative of the secretariat explained that outside contributions were by no means excluded and that they would be even welcomed, provided they fitted in with the secretariat's plans for the Bulletin. He also added that the secretariat, bearing full responsibility for the contents of the Bulletin, must reserve the right to take the final decision in each individual case.

16. Several delegations stressed the importance of project 12-03, Foreign Aid, expressing at the same time the wish that international assistance to Africa be studied in more detail. The desirability of establishing a classification of economic aid by sectors and individual projects was strongly emphasized.

17. Commenting upon project 11-10, Economic Survey of Africa, one delegation pointed out that the secretariat should pay full attention to statistical and other work already done by Headquarters and specialized agencies, in order to avoid duplication or repetition. The representative of the secretariat gave assurance that due care was being taken. It was felt that the study should relate to trends in future development.

(13) - International Trade.

18. In introducing the programme in the field of trade, the secretariat pointed to the reorientation of the programme made necessary by the General Assembly's decision to convene a United Nations conference on

trade and development. Special emphasis had been placed upon projects directly connected with the conference. Several delegates stressed that the studies prepared for the conference should be analytical and not only descriptive, leading to definite conclusions that could assist African governments. The programme should be concentrated on projects underlining the contribution trade could offer for economic development.

19. The work programme could conveniently be divided into three groups dealing with intra-African trade, trade relations of African countries with other continents and more technical aspects of tools and techniques of trade promotion. Special attention was paid to various problems connected with the promotion of intra-African trade, both in a sub-regional setting and in an all-African framework. The necessity to make studies on, and to suggest solutions to, the fiscal and customs problems posed by the transformation of colonial frontiers into frontiers between independent states and the influence of this on traditional trade movements was particularly stressed. The hope was furthermore expressed that sub-regional projects planned for some sub-regions might be extended to the rest of the continent as soon as possible. The work of the secretariat on the impact of extra-African groupings on African trade and development was commended.

20. During the discussion of the project on an African trade fair the attention was drawn to the possibilities of making use of the experience gained by African governments planning to participate in the World Trade Fair in 1964. The possibility of utilizing the knowledge in African countries which had already organized international fairs should also not be overlooked. No opportunity should be missed to draw on all resources which were well versed in the special problems faced by African countries in this respect.

21. It was suggested that project 13-13, Conference on African Businessmen, should be deleted from the work programme. During the discussion it was pointed out by several delegates that, although a conference of this kind might still have its educational value, it should be accorded rather low priority since the subjects covered by such a conference were now dealt with by other means. It was understood, however, that if the need for such a conference should arise in the future, the secretariat might again be called upon to lend its assistance.

III. INDUSTRY, TRANSPORT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND HOUSING

22. In the introduction it was pointed out that this was a new sector of ECA's activities. Both the resources available and the activities undertaken had expanded rapidly in the last year, but the programmes had expanded still more. Consequently, there was a need for the establishment of priorities, and little or nothing could be done on some projects in the next year.

23. At the request of the secretariat, an item in the work programme recommended by the Working Party of the Whole of the Standing Committee on Industry and Natural Resources which, owing to a material error, was omitted from the proposed programme of work and priorities, was inserted as follows:

"21-01 Industrial Statistics

The collection for eventual publication of statistical data on output, imports and exports and also consumption of industrial products. The improvement of both the coverage and quality of industrial statistics".

24. The subsequent items of the work programme should be renumbered accordingly.

(21) - Industry

25. In the discussion on industrial projects it was requested that the title of project 21-01, Inventory of African Resources, should include an inventory of energy resources already being exploited or to be exploited in the near future.

26. Several delegates stressed the importance of project 21-05, Technological Education and Training. The secretariat was requested to work closely not only with the specialized agencies but also with African governments, universities and other institutions. It was recognized that the main emphasis should be on training in Africa but it was pointed out that the utilization of training facilities in non-African countries

should be kept in mind.

27. In the discussion of project 21-06 on Technical Assistance and Special Fund projects, the increasing participation of the ECA secretariat, as part of the policy of decentralization, was noted. It was also suggested, however, that ECA should now begin to develop direct advisory services to governments, permanently available, to assist industrial development. The relationship between research, training and technical assistance was also stressed.

28. The importance of project 21-07, dealing with the promotion of sub-regional co-operation in the development of industries was widely recognized. The forthcoming investigations and missions to West and East Africa were welcomed. It was recommended that similar activities should be carried out in North Africa.

29. In the discussion of project 21-10, Intensive Studies of Individual Industries, the inclusion of industries processing agricultural raw materials was requested. It was recognized that the primary responsibility for these industries lay with FAO. It was noted that FAO was carrying out intensive activities in this field, in co-operation with ECA.

(22) - Transport

30. In introducing the work programme on transport, it was stressed that the programme was also designed to assist other projects, particularly on industry and trade. A meeting to discuss part at least of the studies under project 22-01 (a) and (b) was envisaged for the spring of 1964. At this stage, much of the detailed data would relate to West Africa. Some countries expressed the view that there should be equal coverage of other sub-regions and in particular that more attention should be paid to North Africa. Several delegations stressed the importance, in the work on air transport, of providing the basis for co-ordinated transport on an economic basis throughout Africa.

31. One delegation expressed doubts as to the practical value at the present time of project 22-01 (e) on transit problems.

32. It was recommended that project 22-10, calling for a meeting on transportation and communication services in West Africa, should be reformulated as follows:

"The purpose of the meeting for which preparations are in progress and which is expected to be held in the spring of 1964, is to consider studies on transport development being carried out under projects 22-01 (a) and (b), to elaborate a programme of permanent activities as recommended by the West African Transport Conference held in October 1961; and, so far as possible, to work out similar arrangements for other African sub-regions".

33. The study of trans-Saharan transportation problems, project 22-12, was welcomed as a contribution to the development of all-African transport. A delegation directly interested in the matter pledged full support of his government considering the interest it attached to this problem. The importance of contacts with the International Bank and, eventually, the African development bank, was stressed, as a means of providing a practical follow-up of the study.

(23) - Natural Resources

34. In introducing the programme of work on natural resources, reference was made to the need to establish priorities, in view of its wide scope. These priorities should be established in consultation with governments, in view of the varying emphasis likely to be given to the different projects.

35. It was recommended that project 23-01 (a) should be reformulated as follows:

"The continuing build-up of an inventory of African mineral resources and analysis of development prospects, with special reference to the development of industries on a sub-regional basis and in particular to those being studied in depth under project 21-10".

36. Similarly, it was recommended that project 23-02 should be reformulated as follows:

"Compile, disseminate and analyse information on surface and ground waters in Africa, in collaboration with FAO and other specialized agencies, with the objective of developing the availability and utilization of water resources wherever possible through sub-regional arrangements".

37. One delegation expressed some doubts concerning project 23-01 (f) on the promotion of economic mineral prospecting, in view of the difference between possibilities and practices in different countries. It was pointed out that the main emphasis would be on a comparative study of mining legislation, so that countries could learn from each others' experience and adjust their legislation and prospecting policies where they thought fit.

(24) - Housing and Physical Planning

38. The programme of work was examined on the basis of E/CN.14/230, Corr.1, which had been drawn up on the basis of the recommendations of a meeting of housing experts held in January 1963. Attention was drawn to the projects on which work would be concentrated in the next year or so. The nature of the contribution of the specialized agencies to the programme of work in this field was explained.

IV. AGRICULTURE

39. It was pointed out that the work programme on agriculture is performed by the Joint ECA/FAO Division. This Division provides a link between the large technical and economic programme on agriculture carried out by FAO in Africa and the economic and social work of the rest of the ECA secretariat, to ensure that the agricultural sector is given the necessary consideration in programmes for general economic development. The relatively limited programme of the Division is planned jointly by ECA and FAO and carried out by a staff recruited by both agencies.

40. Attention was drawn by the secretariat to a new project on agricultural industries (33) which was to be carried out by a staff member to be provided by FAO. Other changes and innovations included the introduction of an agricultural economics bulletin for Africa, work on the long-term economic survey of Africa, a meeting on animal production, and investigation of agricultural marketing boards.

41. Some delegations stressed the importance of more intensive work on land reform as a factor in raising the productivity of agriculture and it was agreed to include a new section 31-10 (f) under Ad Hoc Projects of High Priority, worded as follows:

"31-10 (f) In collaboration with FAO and United Nations Headquarters to carry out studies related to the implementation of land reform in Africa in conformity with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations".

42. High priority was attached to work in the field.

43. The importance of soil erosion control was also emphasized as a contribution to the conservation of agricultural resources and reference to the economic implications of this was included in project 31-10 (e) along with irrigation problems.

44. Other additions to the text included emphasis on the application of development techniques to agriculture in relation to social welfare activities referred to in project 31-02.

45. In the discussion of project 32-01, Trade and Marketing of Agricultural Projects, the importance of introducing studies of the terms of trade of African countries was stressed, especially the relationship between the prices of agricultural products and those of industrial products produced in industrialized countries. It was agreed that this would be included in project 13, International Trade.

46. One delegation asked that priority be given to food storage in carrying out project 33 on agricultural industries. This request would be borne in mind by the secretariat.

47. Delegations expressed considerable interest in a number of major agricultural problems confronting African countries. These included the importance of increasing food production without reducing export earnings from cash crops and of securing advice on the likely future demand for export commodities as a guide to production policies. They also expressed interest in the progress of the FAO African survey and in work arising from this and the FAO Mediterranean project.

V. STATISTICS

48. The secretariat's activities in the field of statistics are listed in the work programme under group 1, Continuing Activities of High Priority, as projects 41-01 to 41-06. They all derive from Commission resolutions and/or recommendations of the Conference of African Statisticians.

49. The activities relating to advisory service, training, exchange of information and formulation of standards were described. The scheduled meetings for 1963 on balance of payments, food consumption sample surveys, capital formation and trade statistics were mentioned.

50. It was stated that special attention was paid to relating statistical standards, to local requirements and to the need for development planning under African conditions.

51. It was also mentioned that the activities of the Statistics Division include the compilation, processing and analysis of data required for research in the various substantive divisions of the secretariat.

52. Information was requested on the itinerary of the 1964 study tour on the integration of statistical and planning activities (project 41-02). The secretariat stated that this study tour was being organized by ECA in co-operation with ECE. The tour would take place in Europe as well as in Africa; over sixteen statisticians from each region would participate but the itinerary had not yet been finalized.

VI. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

53. The secretariat presented a corrigendum to the work-programme in the field of public administration to replace pages 60-66 of document E/CN.14/230, in order to give the Committee a more up-to-date version of the proposed programme. Unfortunately, the French version was issued without the last page and projects 51-15 and 51-16 were missing. The explanations were given verbally and the correlation was made to the original report concerning the French version.

54. In presenting the programme of work, the secretariat stressed the fact that public administration is a new activity placed in the economic commissions for the purpose of following government operations more closely. Its aim is to strengthen the government administrations with a view to facilitating economic and social development. The programme of work was for the most part the result of the Seminar on Urgent Administrative Problems of African Governments which took place in Addis Ababa in October 1962.

55. At the request of the Chairman, item 6 was not discussed point by point but the delegates considered the item as a whole. A delegation stressed the relevance of different types of political and administrative structures to the pace and progress of economic and social development, and the need for integrating the various studies proposed to elaborate a practical and complete programme.

56. In view of the consolidation of the training activities under one heading, it is necessary to establish a cross-reference between 51-14 and 61-01 (b).

VII. PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

57. The introduction of the programme of work relating to professional training threw into relief the growing importance, year by year, of the secretariat's activities in this field. Seven points in the programme describe the training activities which are being carried out, or for which preparatory work has reached a very advanced stage, in the fields of

economic and social planning, statistics, customs, community development and demography. Two projects deal with research to be made with a view to laying down a training programme in the realm of the social services and the co-operative movement.

58. Furthermore, the secretariat drew special attention to project 61-01 which relates to a number of training activities, in particular middle-grade and higher training in public administration. The Committee was requested to give the secretariat guidance in its choice of the different possible types of training, bearing in mind the terms of General Assembly Resolution 1824 (XVII) on the role of the United Nations in training personnel for the industrialization of developing countries.

59. The importance of training activities was stressed by the majority of speakers, who expressed their satisfaction at the attention paid to these problems in the programme. The secretariat was warmly encouraged to pursue and extend these activities.

60. At the request of one delegation, the secretariat provided the information that about forty candidates had been put forward by the African governments for the main course of October 1963 at the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning. The allocation of the scholarships available will be carried out in accordance with the directives which the Commission will give the secretariat at its fifth session.

61. It was suggested by one of the delegations that room should be made in the planning courses for professors from the countries with centrally planned economies. The wish was expressed that the summer courses should be continued beyond 1963 by the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning.

62. A demand was made for the establishment of a programme of training for the officials who were to work in the African development bank. It might include in-service training in ECA or the International Bank (IBRD) or any other appropriate institution. It might also include courses held under their auspices in the training institutes.

63. A request was made that the title of Project 61-07 should be amended to make it clear that it concerned refresher courses and not training courses.

64. It was observed that there was no training institute under the auspices of ECA in Central or Eastern Africa. The secretariat gave an assurance that this lack of balance in the geographic distribution of the institutes was unintentional and would be put right in the future. The placing of the institutes was, however, generally decided by the Commission of its various committees.

CONCLUSION

65. During the discussion, certain important questions were referred to the Plenary Session. Having regard to this and other aspects of the problem, various delegates expressed the opinion that the time had come to review the nature and function of the Pre-session meeting on the Programme of Work and Priorities.
