REPORT ON OTHER ACTIVITIES ON TRANSPORT
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At the time of the fourth session, the ECA Transport Section was still in embryo form and has been steadily built up during the year. Its principal activity has been the preparation of papers for the Eastern African Transport Conference which was held in Addis Ababa in October/November 1962 (see report of the Eastern African Transport Conference E/CN.14/193).

Resolution 60(IV) embodied the decisions of the Commission following up the first session of the West African Transport Conference held in Monrovia in October 1961. Inter alia this resolution called upon the West African sub-regional office of the Commission, when set up, to give special attention to sub-regional development of an integrated transport and communications system in West Africa. Although progress is being made, the sub-regional office has not yet been set up (see document E/CN.14/228). However, in preparation for the full implementation of the resolution, members of the secretariat have visited countries in the sub-region for detailed discussions with governments.

In interpretation of the term "an integrated transport and communications system" the unanimous view appears to be that transport integration implies, in the first instance, the co-ordination of all forms of transport territorially as well as sub-regionally. Secondly, it means the evaluation of the choice of the mode of transport on the basis of the lowest economic and social costs; and, thirdly, the avoidance, as far as possible, of duplication of modes of transport. The urgency of establishing a sub-regional base for transport activities in West Africa was stressed throughout. In Nigeria, for example, it is planned to devote over 25 per cent of total estimated public expenditure over the next six years to the development of transport and communications. Early establishment of the sub-regional office is expected to assist the Government not only in determining investment
priorities between different modes of transport but also in working out appropriate links between the Nigerian transport system and that of neighbouring countries. The limited number of transport specialists in the sub-region are overwhelmed with day-to-day duties and have insufficient time for research or detailed analysis of major development proposals. The secretariat's discussion brought out other examples of specific problems in the solution of which UCA could assist. Thus the Government of Sierra Leone is concerned with the future of its railway system which is not operating economically. The shipping authorities of Nigeria and Ghana, the only countries in the sub-region operating national lines, are concerned about the organization and operation of the West African Conference Line (WALCO).

Other topics discussed included bilateral and multi-lateral plans for harmonizing tariffs and transit problems for persons, goods and vehicles in the sub-region; transport financing; and methods of coordinating the receipt of foreign aid from a variety of sources.

Systematic statistical and other data are being collected on the transport situation and its development in the whole sub-region and a paper will be presented in due course for consideration by the meeting called for in the second operative paragraph of resolution 60(IV).

Resolution 61(IV) of transportation across the Sahara requested the Executive Secretary to study and assess the technical and economic problems and means of financing transport facilities across the Sahara in co-operation with the governments concerned. Shortage of staff has made it impossible to carry out this study during the year but preliminary plans have been made and are set out in an addendum to this document to be circulated later.

Now that the Transport Section has been established, considerable thought has been given to the future work programme of the Commission in this field. Hitherto activities have been on a sub-regional basis in West and in East Africa. Continuing attention will be devoted to
sub-regional problems in accordance with past decisions of the Commission and the recommendations of the Eastern African Transport Conference. In addition, however, there are a number of problems ripe for examination which are in varying degrees common throughout Africa. Taking into account past decisions of the Commission and the recommendations of the Eastern African Transport Conference, the Executive Secretary has prepared suggestions for a more systematic and comprehensive programme of work, which is to be found in section 22 of the Programme of Work and Priorities (E/CN.14/230). Attention should be drawn, in particular, to the proposed basic analysis of the present and prospective demand for transport services in the light of expected developments in industry, agriculture and trade, based on on-the-spot studies; and the examination of the most effective ways of co-ordinating the development of all forms of transport on the basis of relative costs, taking into account present utilization of existing facilities, with a view to reducing transport costs to a minimum. Other important investigations proposed concern financing of transport, legislative and administrative problems, and transit problems with particular reference to land-locked states. It is also proposed to devote increasing attention to improving the coverage and quality of African transport statistics.

The time has come when the Commission may wish to consider the establishment of more permanent inter-governmental arrangements in the field of transport on an all-African basis, to supplement the sub-regional arrangements already under way. The setting up of a standing committee on transport was recommended by the Standing Committee on Trade and also by the Eastern African Transport Conference. On the other hand, there are a number of practical difficulties to be resolved and some intermediate solution might be envisaged (see document on Standing Committees, E/CN.14/177). It is also essential to continue to develop working relations with other organizations concerned with African transport problems. Thus, the International Civil Aviation Organization has the primary responsibility for the development of
African air transport but its work should be explicitly co-ordinated with studies and action on other forms of transport. The United Nations Special Fund is in a position to finance pre-investment studies in the transport field and to establish training programmes. The International Communications Organization has the primary responsibility in the field of telecommunications. The CCTA is working on a variety of technological problems and is, perhaps, better placed than ECA to take the main responsibility in this field. Non-governmental international organizations, such as the International Road Federation, have also an important part to play. The ECA would appear to be in a position to promote the co-ordination of these efforts.