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REPORT OF AN ECA ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION MISSION
TO CENTRAL AFRICA

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. During the third Executive Committee meeting's discussion of the Report of the Economic Co-operation Mission^{1/} that visited West Africa in April/May 1970, it was observed in connexion with that mission's recommendations that, "in order to achieve a fair sample of consultations to constitute the basis for a policy decision by the Executive Committee and the Conference of Ministers, visits to other countries in the (Africa) region would be advisable".^{2/} A second ECA mission was accordingly sent out from 16 June to 12 July - to the Central African sub-region, with the following composition: Messrs. P. Rajaobelina, Deputy Executive Secretary (leader), K.K. Apeadu, Director of the ECA Centre for Economic Co-operation and J.B. Beleoken, Director of the ECA Sub-regional Office in Central Africa. The mission's terms of reference were as laid down earlier by the Executive Committee, viz., "in the light of geographical contiguity and the necessity for ensuring that the sub-regional groupings were compact and related to economic realities, seven sub-regions might be created instead of the four existing sub-regions". Further, "consultations should be undertaken to determine in what ways such organizations could be expanded and strengthened to cater for sub-regional economic co-operation".^{3/}

2. Before the commencement of the mission, messages were received from Gabon and Chad requesting that, as their other activities prevented their giving adequate attention to the mission as planned, its visit to those countries should be postponed by two and six months respectively. Some days later, after the mission had arrived in the sub-region, the People's Republic of the Congo also requested a postponement of its visit there

^{1/} Report of an ECA Economic Co-operation Mission to West Africa, ECA, E/CN.14/478.

^{2/} Report of the Third Meeting of the Executive Committee, ECA, E/CN.14/479.

^{3/} Report of the Second Meeting of the Executive Committee, ECA, E/CN.14/462.

for a similar reason. It had then been already decided that, as earlier enquiries addressed to the Governments had disclosed that no rescheduling of the mission would suit all the countries taken together for many months to come, the best way of complying with the Executive Committee's recommendations was to undertake the mission as then planned. Mainly on account of the close resemblance between the objectives of the sub-regions and those of the multinational inter-disciplinary development advisory teams (UNDATs), and the relevance of the mission's terms of reference to the UNDATs, it was decided that an ECA mission to study the future of the sub-regions could not do better than visit the Central African sub-region^{1/} now, where an UNDAT and a sub-regional office were shortly to operate in the closest proximity to each other.

3. Ultimately, it proved possible for the mission to ascertain the views of more countries than expected. During its stop-over in Brazzaville, it was able to obtain certain valuable interviews, and the Gabon Minister for the Plan and his delegation to the Eleventh Session of UDEAC's Management Committee also held useful discussions with the mission at Douala. Finally, by reason of Chad's membership of many inter-State organs and projects, as well as its bilateral arrangements for economic co-operation with some of the countries visited, the mission was enabled to gain an appreciation of the position of that country on most of the central issues that confronted the co-operative endeavours in the sub-region.

B. PATTERN OF INTER-STATE CO-OPERATION

4. Compared to the East and West African sub-regions, the response to ECA's stimulation towards the construction of institutional machinery for promoting inter-State economic co-operation has been slow in the

^{1/} Membership of the Central African sub-region: Chad, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, People's Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. Though Rwanda and Burundi are already members of the East African sub-region, they have expressed a wish to participate in the programmes of the Central African sub-region, on account of their special geographic position.

Central African sub-region. At the sub-regional meeting convened under ECA's auspices to discuss the matter in 1966^{1/} the ECA recommended the creation of machinery consisting of a permanent ministerial council and committees of experts in the three key sectors viz., plan harmonization, particularly in industry and energy, transport and trade, agriculture and natural resources. The proposal was accepted, and the participants agreed to refer it to their Heads of State and Government, with a recommendation for its implementation. No information has reached the ECA about this expected action: the discussion of the matter at the latest ECA meeting of the Central African countries held in November 1969^{2/} was deferred, and the mission did not get the impression that the proposal enjoys high priority in the countries' plans at the present.

5. This situation may be explained partly by the fact that unlike the other sub-regions, in Central Africa the countries' own efforts at co-operation had advanced very far in the quality of institutions as well as membership strength and degree of co-operation before the ECA's initiative was taken.^{3/} While pre-independence ties got weaker in some sub-regions, most of the countries in the Central African sub-region in fact strengthened such ties, particularly in the trade, monetary and banking fields on the attainment of independence. Thus, the links between the countries of former French Equatorial Africa (AEF) and Cameroon, which had been developing in the form of a limited and loose Customs union between 1942 and 1948, gathered strength in 1961, when Cameroon became an associate member of the Union Douanière Equatoriale (UDE). UDE itself

1/ Report on the Sub-regional Meeting on Economic Co-operation in Central Africa, ECA, E/CN.14/351.

2/ Report on the Sub-regional Meeting on Economic Co-operation in Central Africa, ECA, E/CN.14/465.

3/ The first significant action taken in the continent within the ECA framework to implement general resolutions on the subject on a sub-regional basis was in October/November 1965, when the Eastern African countries decided at Lusaka to set up institutional machinery for inter-State economic co-operation. Later, in May 1966 the Terms of Association, pending the ratification of a formal Treaty, were initialled by Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, Zambia.

owed its origins to a fiscal and Customs convention signed by the AEF members in 1957, which was later to be incorporated in formal conventions in 1959, and its ties with Cameroon became stronger in 1962, when a common external tariff was included in its objectives. To consolidate the commercial relations thus developing, and to give Cameroon full status in all negotiations, in 1964 the four UDE members together with Cameroon signed the Union Douanière et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC) Treaty which became operative in January 1966.

6. Monetary co-operation developed side by side with the evolution of commercial institutions between the AEF countries and Cameroon. In 1955, the Institut d'Emission de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française et du Cameroun had come into existence as the first common monetary institution for Gabon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the People's Republic of the Congo and Cameroon. However, the true multinational character of this institution was to be established between 1959 and 1960, when the earlier statutes were amended, changing the institution's name to Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique Equatoriale et du Cameroun (BCEAEQ), at which time France concluded a co-operation agreement with the five countries. The corresponding monetary union (Union Monétaire de l'Afrique Equatoriale et du Cameroun) was set up in 1962 to complete the monetary and banking institutional structure for the five countries.

7. As a result of incorporation of UDE's main features (after suitable modifications) in the UDEAC Treaty, the latter has maintained the single tax (taxe unique) system and the Solidarity Fund. It also goes further than UDE in such fields as unification of all import taxation and investment codes, as well as harmonization of fiscal systems and development plans and programmes, particularly in industry and transport. UDEAC maintains an intense degree of activity at all its institutional levels: Heads of State and Government, Management Committee (made up of Ministers responsible for economic matters), Technical Committees of Experts, and General Secretariat. With the exception of minor problems, the Customs and tariff aspects of the Union function reasonably well. Unification of

a substantial proportion of import taxes has been completed; differentiated common external tariffs are in application; there is almost complete free circulation of goods in the UDEAC area; and common Customs offices existing throughout the Union find their work facilitated by standardized Customs nomenclature. By virtue of the close contacts existing in monetary and banking matters among its members within the framework of the CFA franc system, UDEAC's progress towards the establishment of a common market has been facilitated in several ways. Payments obstacles to trade imposed by the inconvertibility of currencies, as well as balance of payments difficulties, are almost unknown within the Union, and the obligation the system imposes on its members to accept monetary co-ordination and adoption of stable monetary policies assists towards the general harmonization of economic policies.

8. It is in the search of a formula for an equitable distribution of benefits among its members that UDEAC has encountered its most serious difficulties. The problem of allocation of multinational industries has eluded solution so far, and the preliminary phase agreed upon a few years ago has not encouraged any fast advance. A rather unclear system of classifying industries has been laid down in the Treaty, and as the classification carries with it the right (either national or union) to impose various taxes on industrial production, UDEAC's authority in these matters has been eroded by the encroachments on it made possible by the loopholes in the system. The result has been a certain concentration of development in those countries that have had a headstart in industrialization, backed by a comparatively better developed infrastructure. In consequence, some discontent has arisen on the part of the deprived and less developed areas. The mission, however, noted that the industrial classification system was being examined with a view to its streamlining. The Management Committee, at its latest meeting, also studied the general question of industrial harmonization, based on co-ordinated or joint planning of industrial development and such closely related problems as harmonization of investment codes, laws and regulations, as well as fiscal systems, and referred these matters to the Council of Heads of State and Government for decision.

9. In the past few years, political differences between the Democratic Republic of Congo and People's Republic of the Congo have reduced the few natural opportunities that existed for co-operation between UDEAC and the former. To all with a keen interest in the furtherance of economic co-operation in the area, therefore, the reconciliation recently brought about has been hailed as a welcome event. The "Manifesto of June 16" announcing this, records agreement to re-establish telecommunication links and river traffic between the two countries, the restoration of overflight rights in each other's territory, and the revival of social, economic and political intercourse at all levels.

10. Earlier hopes of closer institutional relations between the UDEAC countries and the Democratic Republic of Congo have not materialized on the lines generally anticipated, for other reasons. In April 1968, both Chad and the Central African Republic withdrew from UDEAC to join the Democratic Republic of Congo in forming the Union des Etats d'Afrique Centrale (UEAC). The Central African Republic, however, returned to the UDEAC fold by the end of the same year, and has fully resumed its position in that organization. Two of the main reasons given for this were imperfections in the administration of the Solidarity Fund of the UDEAC and dissatisfaction on the part of the land-locked countries in regard to the sharing of integration benefits, mainly in the industrial and transport sectors. These factors largely explain the stress the UEAC Treaty lays on "the adoption of provisions that will take into account the interests of each and every one and that will sufficiently alleviate, through appropriate measures, the special situation of the economically less developed countries". A way of doing this is a "more effective solidarity in a common transportation and telecommunications organization", and the "adoption of a procedure for the equitable well-balanced allocation of industries, with due consideration for the development level of each of the Member States".^{1/} Another significant difference

1/ Charter of the Union of Central African States, Fort Lamy, 2 April 1968.

between the UEAC and UDEAC Treaties is that the former gives a significant place to co-operation in defence and security matters. This latter difference accounts for the distribution of responsibilities in the UEAC Treaty, which leaves most of the initiative to the Conference of Heads of State and Government, with correspondingly less to its Secretariat.

11. On the whole, the mission learnt that not much headway had been made yet by UEAC in the economic field, although its Treaty contains provision on development co-ordination of the various sectors of its members' economies, including trade liberalization, establishment of a Compensation and Investment Fund, as well as an Investment Bank. It is possible that the relatively small trading opportunities between the two countries so far, and the absence of geographical contiguity present obstacles to economic harmonization efforts.

12. Despite Chad's formal withdrawal from UDEAC, it can in no way be said that its economic and social contacts with its former partners have significantly diminished. Admittedly, for it, the multilateral transactions which characterized its UDEAC membership have ceased. But these have been replaced by a series of bilateral economic relations that could, in effect, ensure that there should be no major divergence in economic policies between it and the UDEAC countries. For instance, a recent meeting of the Chad and Cameroon ministers responsible for economic affairs has resulted in draft agreements on economic and social co-operation between the two countries. Among the areas covered are Customs, commercial and general economic co-operation. More immediately, a joint development commission is to be set up for exploiting the resources of River Logone, and a second is to address itself to the financing of studies on extending the Trans-Cameroonian Railway to Chad.

13. It goes without saying that any success attained by Cameroon and Chad in the pursuit of common policies in the areas covered by the joint schemes envisaged between them, should in itself enhance the chances of achieving harmonization of development policies and programmes between Chad and its other former UDEAC partners. Similar results might be expected from the Chad

Basin Commission whose four members (viz., Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria) are already planning the extension of their programmes from simple water resources utilization to telecommunications and transport. Mention should also be made of contacts between Gabon and Equatorial Guinea which could develop on lines similar to those between Senegal and Gambia. The indications seem to be that Equatorial Guinea might be drawn into the UDEAC in a manner not unlike that now characterizes Gambian and OERS relations.

14. While the Democratic Republic of Congo is linked institutionally in a somewhat tenuous fashion to its northern and western neighbours, its contacts with Rwanda and Burundi have historical origins dating from pre-independence days, when a common metropolitan administering power constituted the unifying factor. During the mission's stay in the sub-region, it saw ample evidence that the old bonds were being tightened, and read a speech by the reigning King of Belgium (then on a visit to all the three countries) in praise of the actions being taken in this regard. In 1969, the countries had commenced rebuilding their old bridges by setting up three Commissions respectively to promote co-operation in economic and technical, political and juridical, social and cultural matters. Such important organs as a Co-ordinating Commission, a Council of Ministers and Conference of Heads of State and Government have been added to the structure, and a Permanent Secretariat may be set up in the near future. Progress before this stage had been rather slow, partly on account of political differences in the years immediately following independence. The mission was also informed that another cause was the uneasy memories of the pre-independence era, when some difficulty had been encountered in devising and implementing a formula for an equitable promotion of economic growth in the three countries, thereby failing to reconcile sectoral or national interests with those of the Union.

15. The mission learnt that with improved prospects for co-operation among these former partners, serious thought is now being given to multi-national projects in such fields as gas and water resources exploitation.

To facilitate their access to the sea, both Rwanda and Burundi (which have stated repeatedly that their geographical position favours active co-operation with both Central and East African sub-regions) have recently signed the TIR Convention with the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania. Inter-subregional co-operation is also being fostered by Rwanda and Burundi, which are seeking closer links with the East African Community: studies are being undertaken to determine the precise fields in which co-operation could prove beneficial to both sides. On the basis of such a study, the institutional arrangements are then to be worked out: full membership or some partial institutional links, as might appear suitable in the circumstances. The Kagera River basin scheme that could well develop on the pattern of the OERS, outside the framework of the East African Community is under discussion, and may be launched shortly as a joint project for Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya and Tanzania. This scheme is of the multi-purpose type, and could involve the partner countries in co-ordinated activities covering agriculture, power, transportation and tourism.

16. A recent inter-State organization to appear on the scene is the Conference of East and Central African States. It has the rare distinction of drawing its membership from three of the four sub-regions, and of not being based on any formal treaty. It also embraces both major language groups (English and French) and includes six of the countries from the sub-region (namely Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, People's Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda). The Conference started as a sort of good neighbours' club to provide a forum for finding a consensus on political questions of direct and common concern to its members, and like UEAC, this initial bias is reflected partially in its objectives and earlier programmes. Since its Summit Meeting in February 1969, however, it has adopted an impressive number of resolutions^{1/} on economic and social matters, calling for co-operative planning and execution of common projects. Many of these offer opportunities for close

^{1/} Report on the Sixth Summit Conference of East and Central African Heads of State and Government, Khartoum Central Record Office, 1970.

co-operation between it and the ECA. In implementing the resolutions, the organization is already experiencing difficulties, due to the fact that it has neither a budget nor a Permanent General Secretariat, the present arrangement being that member States are to take it in turns to provide secretariat facilities in their respective capitals and share meeting costs. Moreover, operating outside the framework of a formal treaty, the organization could not invoke legal support for its decisions, which should therefore depend purely on members' goodwill for their enforcement.

17. Like the Conference of East and Central African States, l'Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache (OCAM), in which all the countries of the sub-region except Burundi are members, extends across three sub-regions, viz., Central, East and West. It also has a large membership. It differs, however, from the former in certain essential respects. In the first place, it was founded on the basis of a Treaty. Secondly, as in the case of UDEAC and UEAC, its membership is confined to only one language group (French). OCAM's representatives, however, pointed out to the mission that, as in the other cases, its Treaty contains specific provision which could prevent this accident of history, as it was once called, becoming a permanent feature of its membership. Thirdly, OCAM's method of operation differs markedly from those of the other inter-State institutions in the sub-region. Unlike them, it does not own or administer any common economic or social enterprises as such; rather, on the basis of its studies and recommendations, it inspires their creation, and then leaves them to operate as autonomous undertakings under their separate constitutions and management. It, however, helps to iron out policy problems that prove insuperable to them.

18. The most active of the OCAM-sponsored enterprises include Air Afrique, Organisation Africaine et Malgache des Postes et Télécommunications, and Organisation Africaine et Malgache de la Propriété Industrielle.^{1/} There are also Organisation Africaine et Malgache du Café and Conseil Africaine

^{1/} See Annex II.

et Malgache du Sucre which, inter alia, seek to co-ordinate the Member States' marketing of the commodities concerned. A similar commodity control scheme is being worked out for meat. Two joint institutions which do not owe their creation to OCAM, namely Inter-Etats d'Ingénieurs de l'Équipement Rural, and Office de Développement de Tourisme Africain are also, according to recent OCAM decisions, to come under its umbrella and consequently enjoy its general support.

19. OCAM's extensive interests have also found expression in the formation of an association for development banks of the Member States. It has also instituted a technical assistance scheme providing for joint utilization of technical and other training institutes, as well as the offer of technical assistance experts by well-endowed Member States to the needy ones within the Organization. Its list of projects under examination includes Africanization and promotion of African enterprises, social security, the adoption of common national accounting systems, reform of African universities, inter-university co-operation, industrial and general development harmonization. Its work programme keeps all its organs (Heads of State and Government, Council of Ministers and General Administrative Secretariat) busy throughout the year, and the organization receives a considerable amount of technical assistance from both bilateral and multilateral sources, including certain United Nations agencies, with some of which special accords have been signed for the purpose.

C. VIEWS ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

20. Consultations with the Governments' representatives, as well as those of the inter-State organs in the sub-region on the Executive Committee's proposals, were conducted on two main lines, thus:

- First, what were the reactions of the Governments and organizations to the proposal to divide the sub-region into two, with the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and (in the future) Angola and Namibia constituting a separate sub-region?

- Secondly, what was the scope for rationalization, by way of reducing the existing groupings into a much smaller number, with each of the proposed sub-regions containing one strong, preferably multi-purpose grouping embracing all the countries of that sub-region as members?

(i) Division of the sub-region

21. Throughout the mission's interviews, the proposal to divide the sub-region into two was seen to be linked in people's minds with the UNDAT that was expected to be set up soon in the north and western part of the sub-region. The confusion between the UNDAT and the Sub-regional Office seemed to persist even after the mission had carefully explained the composition, objectives and modus operandi of the former in the light of communications with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (New York) and ECA headquarters. It was thus found out in the course of the various discussions that, though initially UDEAC and its Member States welcomed the proposal to divide the sub-region into two, their prime reason was to ensure closer attention to their technical assistance requirements. Such needs have grown in recent years in proportion to the difficulty encountered within the Union in finding fully acceptable solutions to the problem of harmonized development of their various sectors. The UNDAT is, therefore, to them, the fulfilment of this long-felt need. Consequently, on being reminded of the Executive Committee's recommendation^{1/} that there should be no question of establishing new sub-regional offices until the existing ones had been satisfactorily staffed, they quickly held to the idea of the UNDAT, and correspondingly showed less enthusiasm about that of a second sub-region. In any event, they themselves raised the issue of shortage of the necessary resources at the Sub-regional Office in Kinshasa, and expressed skepticism about the value in the proposal to create a second sub-region, if there was no certainty that it meant anything more than a skeleton office of the type with which they have become familiar in the sub-region.

^{1/} Report of the Third Meeting of the Executive Committee, supra.

22. This was seen by the mission as the only reason behind the request for a second UNDAT, forcefully expressed in certain quarters, to serve the remaining three countries in the sub-region: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. To them too, the type of supplementary technical assistance to be offered by an UNDAT was sought as a means of obtaining a service which, at least in part, they have been looking forward in vain to receiving from the ECA Sub-regional Office. Their attitude is, therefore, that if such needs could only be met through an UNDAT, their claim for an UNDAT should be immediately satisfied too. The mission pointed out that United Nations budgetary limitations rendered it impossible to meet such a request, considering particularly its repercussions on other countries in the African region. It was to be noted in this connexion that the first meeting of the Technical Committee of Experts had recommended that "to ensure fair coverage of the countries, the teams should be distributed evenly throughout the continent right from the beginning, since there was a large volume of work remaining unattended on account of the inadequacy of the secretariat's resources."^{1/}

23. While the mission recognizes that the continent's needs cannot be fully satisfied at once, it nevertheless feels that the claim deserves to be regarded seriously by the Executive Committee, if only as further clear expression of the disappointment that the African countries experience in consequence of the failure of the ECA sub-regional offices to meet their requirements. While the ECA sub-regional offices remain comparatively underprivileged as compared to the UNDATs in terms of resources, the countries receiving UNDAT assistance will no doubt be placed in an enviable position. The mission appreciates the fear expressed repeatedly to it that the effect of this on the remaining countries is unlikely to be salutary. It therefore holds the view that, even if the situation could be only minimally helped by further clear explanations about the UNDAT, this should be done by the prospective team leader expected soon to visit the area concerned. Above all, the mission recommends that the

^{1/} Report of the First Meeting of the Technical Committee of Experts,
ECA, E/CN.14/474.

resources situation of the Central African Sub-regional Office should be considerably improved, simultaneously with the establishment of the UNDAT. The same observation applies to the remaining sub-regions.

24. The countries concerned were also not certain if, right from the start, the UNDAT would be able to perform the full range of functions customarily expected of an ECA sub-regional office. Should this not be the case, they would value maintenance of their contacts with the Kinshasa Sub-regional Office, over and above the tasks that the UNDAT would perform for them. This would mean, in practice, that there would, to all intents and purposes be, during the experimental period of the UNDAT, one sub-regional office in Central Africa - located in Kinshasa. Furthermore, it calls for the latter's maintaining some contacts with all the multi-national groupings in the sub-region, without of course duplicating the strictly technical assistance that the UNDAT would offer to the countries. The modus vivendi between the UNDAT and the Sub-regional Office would need to be carefully worked out in the light of the final definition of the UNDAT's mode of operation.

25. The countries of the proposed second sub-region were also for reasons stated below, unconvinced that the recommendation had been subjected to thorough examination. As stated earlier, the Democratic Republic of Congo has links with Chad which serve to connect the former's economy to the UDEAC countries'. At the same time, the recent rapprochement between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the People's Republic of the Congo could well herald the strengthening of economic and social ties between the former and the same grouping. Of particular significance in this regard is the recent reduction by UDEAC countries of 50 per cent or more in their common external tariff. This disposes of a major objection which the Democratic Republic of Congo has had against commercial relations with UDEAC for several years. Therefore, the suggestion that such a valuable trading partner as UDEAC should be separated out, in a different sub-region, could appear frustrating to the Democratic Republic of Congo and even inimical to its economic interests on the whole.

26. In Rwanda and Burundi, the proposal was viewed with some indifference; for though it would appear to give formal recognition to their newly growing ties with the Democratic Republic of Congo, these two countries, for the reasons given earlier, also see considerable merit in maintaining strong links with their East African neighbours. They did not therefore feel that their relations with the Central African countries should receive any special treatment, such as the creation of a separate sub-region for the three might confer on them. It should be recalled that these two countries now conduct their affairs with both East and Central African sub-regions as if they were only one sub-region in fact. To drive the point home, high official representatives of one of these countries suggested that the ECA should, far from dividing the Central African sub-region into two sub-regions, take steps to obliterate the existing boundary between East and Central sub-regions. The result would be a merger between the two, the new sub-region extending from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, and made up roughly of all the countries of the Central African sub-region and several of the East African sub-region. A reorganized East African sub-region would then also emerge.

27. The mission recognizes the force in the foregoing argument, without necessarily endorsing the view that a new, larger Central African or Equatorial (as it was called) sub-region should be created. It also feels convinced that any activities such as those that orient the economic relations of Rwanda and Burundi eastwards, and link up the two sub-regions should be commended for leading towards the widely accepted goal of continental African economic unity. On the other hand, splitting the Central African sub-region could, in the absence of unanimity on the part of the countries concerned, conceivably lead to confusion about ECA's strategy, even if it did not result in a frustration of certain forms of economic intercourse in the area. After its decade of patient and relentless work in spearheading the drive towards economic co-operation in the African continent, such an adverse repercussion could be unfortunate.

(ii) Prospects of rationalization of the groupings

28. Excluding Rwanda and Burundi, the countries of the Central African sub-region belong to seven mainly economic and social inter-State organizations with membership confined to, but by no means embracing all the countries in the sub-region (Annex II). Together with Rwanda (in many cases) and Burundi (in a few) they are also members of nearly as many African groupings which differ from the former type of organization mainly in the fact that their memberships extend to other parts of the African continent (Annex II). They also naturally participate in many others again, with memberships distributed over other continents. The principal objective of these latter is the co-ordination of policies regarding the production and marketing of common commodities. Those operating on the African continent so closely intermesh that there is a sense in which it could be said that policies and actions in one are bound soon to affect those of all the others. For instance, transport and telecommunications projects featuring in the preliminary discussions in UEAC, meant to lead to the establishment of a work programme for that group, have already been incorporated in the work programmes of UDEAC, Chad Basin Commission, the Conference of the East and Central African States, and of course, under the auspices of the ECA, that of the Central African sub-region. A good number of other instances could be cited. It is for this reason that it was suggested earlier that, so long as Chad's links with its former UDEAC partners were retained through bilateral agreements with the Central African Republic and Cameroon, a reasonable measure of co-ordination could be preserved between its economic policies and those of the UDEAC countries.

29. The obvious question that might be asked therefore is, "Should all the numerous organizations be retained or should there be rationalization with a view to reducing their numbers?". One reason for the existing multiplicity of organizations is that, on account of geographical factors, it cannot be worth the while of all the countries to join all, particularly as many of the latter tend to pursue rather narrowly defined

economic or social objectives. Thus, until the Chad Basin Commission has advanced significantly beyond its present scope of co-ordination of plans for utilizing the water resources of the lake, it would not be practical to recommend an extension of its membership to non-riparian countries. Another reason is the technical differences between individual projects, which must for that reason, be subject to different management procedures. In the case of the institutions which OCAM has helped to found, for example, it is out of the question that some complex should be evolved through an amalgamation of the various disparate subjects. Moreover, since despite their membership of OCAM, the countries have, in exercise of their freedom of decision, joined certain of these institutions and not others, a merger of all the institutions would be difficult to contemplate.

30. The political differences discussed in earlier paragraphs have also militated against the trend towards the larger sort of groupings that the ECA has been advocating. On the contrary, withdrawals from certain organizations and hesitation on the part of non-members to join those in which membership should normally be of benefit to them have been characteristic features of the movements in the sub-region. Especially in the groupings in which Conferences of Heads of State and Government constitute a regular part of the consultative machinery, membership has been viewed in the sub-region as involving a certain measure of political commitment. The indications are therefore that, wherever prospective members of the groupings could be convinced that, on admission they could retain their freedom of decision and action on political questions, they would be more ready to join the groupings of their interest.

31. The problem seems to be that membership is declared to be open to all, whereas it may in certain cases involve commitments unacceptable to others for political and other reasons. In some instances, the difficulty has been compounded by the failure of past associations in the area to demonstrate beyond doubt that all participating countries stand to gain by the ensemble of economic co-operation measures embarked upon by a particular union. It is therefore salutary that, in recent months, political

relations have taken a turn for the better. In such an atmosphere, it should not be too difficult for all concerned to make the required effort to reach an understanding on the question of benefits for the needy members (prospective or actual) in the various groupings. However, it appeared to the mission that the process of re-establishing mutual confidence was a somewhat slow one.

32. In assessing economic co-operation prospects in the sub-region, due weight should also be given to the factor of sovereignty. Even in UDEAC, generally regarded as one of the most successful multi-purpose inter-State organs in the African continent, this factor has acted as a strong brake on the pace of progress towards the chosen goal of full economic union. The slowness in reaching agreement on harmonization of investment codes, industrial and general economic development, and thus to advance beyond the narrow boundaries of Customs and fiscal co-operation is a measure of the difficulty that has been experienced in subordinating national interests to those of the community. It is reasonable to expect that, so long as these crucial areas are isolated from union direction and influence, any new applicants basing their prospective membership on the harmonization of development in such areas would be regarded with little enthusiasm.

33. This is unfortunate, since in such developing countries as those of the sub-region, the alternative approach to economic co-operation through trade liberalization has only limited possibilities. With commodity production geared almost entirely to local consumption, or export to overseas markets, the scope for intra-subregional trade is severely restricted even within UDEAC, thus curtailing the value of measures devised merely to stimulate and expand trade. Besides, any hopes of expansion in this sector on the admission of the Democratic Republic of Congo into the UDEAC Common Market need also to be tempered by the fear that became apparent to the mission, on the part of the UDEAC countries, that a removal of trade barriers between the two parties could result in a swamping of their younger and less vibrant industries. Perhaps the best

strategy would be the one that does not seek to deal with existing enterprises from the start, but rather introduces a scheme for new multinational projects, carefully distributing them among all the new and old Member States, and guaranteeing them unrestricted and equal access to all the markets within the group. Thus, as between UDEAC and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the best approach towards economic co-operation appears to be by way of single projects.

34. For reasons stated earlier, and on account of the link existing between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad within UEAC, Chad could evolve similar economic relations with UDEAC. This sort of development should be encouraged, as it would enhance the opportunities of attaining a higher degree of complementarity in the whole area: the coastal areas, generally better endowed with natural resources, would with the addition of the Democratic Republic of Congo to Cameroon, Gabon and the People's Republic of the Congo, increase their capacity for spreading the benefits of development into the lesser developed hinterland areas. One would, however, have to await developments within UEAC itself, including the reduction of emphasis on security questions within it, before seeing the sort of evolution anticipated above. On the other hand, if the momentum generated in the reconstruction of the former links among the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi is maintained, one may soon witness the emergence of this separate grouping in the eastern part of the sub-region.

35. An all-embracing single multi-purpose inter-State organization to serve all the countries of the sub-region may therefore take some time in coming into existence. This, however, is not necessarily a matter for regret, since through inter-subregional co-operation, as is being generated between East and Central African sub-regions by Rwanda and Burundi, through such wider associations as OCAM, the Conference of East and Central African States, and continental economic associations (e.g., African Development Bank, African Civil Aviation Commission, etc.), it is evident that steady approaches are being made towards all-African

economic co-operation all the time. In short, several routes lead to continental economic co-operation, and many of these are being followed in the Central African sub-region now.

D. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

36. It would be hazardous to predict a rapid trend towards larger economic groupings in the sub-region. The indications are that if political differences, which have bedevilled inter-State co-operation in the last decade, diminish as in the manner now evident, a counterpart of UDEAC may develop in the eastern half of the sub-region on the foundations of the former union between the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. Full sub-regional unity for all on the lines of commonly owned and jointly operated inter-State organs may probably have to await a fairly firm construction of this new union by its members, as well as further developments in UEAC, for which the time may, however, not yet be ripe. On the other hand, the countries in the sub-region are unwilling to surrender the existing bond constituted by their common membership of the sub-region, and may view the proposed splitting of the sub-region as likely to undermine such unity.

37. As in West Africa, such unity is being furthered in practice by the emergence of functional co-operative schemes not closely involving Heads of State and Government in the institutional sense. Thus, through wider associations, as well as links between sub-regions through joint economic enterprises, it is evident that the approach towards all-African economic co-operation is in progress.

38. The inter-State organizations confined to the Central African sub-region, owing their origin to the initiative of the member countries themselves, have made faster progress in the construction and maintenance of common institutions for promoting economic co-operation, as compared to those sponsored by the ECA (para. 4).

39. Despite the withdrawal of Chad from UDEAC, opportunities of co-operation between the two still exist through the close bilateral relations between it and some UDEAC countries (paras. 12-13).

40. Attempts being made to revive the pre-independence links between the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi are receiving encouragement from many quarters (paras. 14-15).
41. The idea of establishing an UNDAT in the sub-region has been warmly welcomed mainly by the countries concerned. Those not to benefit directly from the Team's operations query why similar facilities should not be obtained from the ECA Sub-regional Office. Failing this, the resources situation of the Sub-regional Office at Kinshasa and, for that matter, of all the ECA sub-regional offices should be considerably strengthened simultaneously with the UNDATs. The prospective leader of the UNDAT should be prepared to discuss fully all aspects of the Team with the countries concerned during his preliminary round of consultations expected to take place soon. In particular, the relationship between the UNDAT, the United Nations Economic and Social Affairs Department and the ECA, should be clarified with the respective Governments (paras. 21-23).
42. For a number of reasons, certain links existing between the ECA Sub-regional Office in Kinshasa and the countries to be served by the UNDAT should be retained. This makes it necessary for a modus vivendi to be worked out between these two. The Sub-regional Office should retain its liaison and other relations with the countries to be served by the UNDAT, as distinct from the purely technical assistance responsibilities to be assigned to the UNDAT (para. 24).
43. The proposal to divide the Central African sub-region into two has had a mixed reception in the area, partly because there appears to be little room for a second sub-region with the complement of staff and other resources on the same scale as the existing Sub-regional Office (as conceived by the Executive Committee) and the UNDAT. In the circumstances, any propagation of the idea is apt to lead to a misunderstanding of ECA's strategy for economic co-operation (paras. 25-27).
44. The goal of complete sub-regional economic and social unity is being approached in the sub-region by diverse routes, and while it may not be reached in only a few years, other links between the sub-region and others constitute a simultaneous advance towards continental African economic unity (paras. 28-35).

ANNEX I / ANNEKE I

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED ON MISSION TO CENTRAL AFRICA /
LISTE DES PERSONNES INTERROGÉES LORS DE LA MISSION EN AFRIQUE CENTRALE

Yaoundé (Cameroon) - 16-23 June 1970

Yaoundé (Cameroun) - 16-23 juin 1970

17 June 1970 / 17 juin 1970

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) /
Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD)

M. Sartorius - Représentant Résident

Office of the President /
Présidence de la République

M. Paul Biya - Ministre d'Etat, Secrétaire Général à la Présidence de la République, Représentant le Chef de l'Etat

Ministry of Industrial Development and Trade /
Ministère du Développement Industriel et Commercial

M. Mpouma - Ministre du Développement industriel et commercial

Common Organization of African and Malagasy States /
Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache (OCAM)

M. Falilou Kane - Secrétaire Général

M. Foalem - Directeur des Affaires Economiques et Financières et des Transports

M. Diaw Max - Chef de la Division de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique de l'OCAM

M. Daix - Chef de la Division du Développement économique et social

18 June 1970 / 18 juin 1970

African and Malagasy Organization for Industrial Estate /
Organisation Africaine et Malgache de la Propriété Industrielle

M. Anguile-Ousmane - Directeur-Adjoint

M. David Goma - Contrôleur Financier

M. de Fondeville - Conseiller Technique

M. Raparson - Service des Brevets

M. Zossou - Agent comptable

Various Ministries (working group) /
Divers Ministères (séance de travail)

M. Efon - Ministre du Plan et du Développement
M. François Nvomo - Secrétaire Général du Ministère du Plan
M. Njo-Ida - Directeur a.i. des Affaires Economiques au Ministère
des Affaires Etrangères
M. Mendouga - Sous-Directeur, chargé des Organisations internationales,
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
M. Mouoyebe Ndedi - Directeur de la Statistique
M. Nya Ngatchou - Directeur, Ministère du Plan
M. Ferdinand Ngoue - Directeur-Adjoint, Ministère du Plan
M. Mvondo - Ministère du Plan
M. Eno Belinga

19 June 1970 / 19 juin 1970

Ministry of National Education /
Ministère de l'Education Nationale

M. Z. Mongo Soo - Ministre de l'Education Nationale

20 June 1970 / 20 juin 1970

Ambassadeur du Gabon

UDEAC: M. Onana Awana - Secrétaire Général

USAID: M. Bishop - Chargé des Affaires Economiques

22 June 1970 / 22 juin 1970

Ministry of Foreign Affairs /
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

M. R. Nteppe - Ministre des Affaires Etrangères
M. F.X. Tchoungui - Secrétaire Général
M. E. Njo-Ida - Directeur a.i. des Affaires Economiques
M. Mendouga - Sous-Directeur, chargé des Organisations internationales

Bangui (Central African Republic) - 23-25 June 1970

Bangui (République centrafricaine) - 23-25 juin 1970

24 June 1970 / 24 juin 1970

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) /
Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD)

Docteur Nicolas - Représentant Résident a.i.

Ministry of State /
Ministère d'Etat

M. Guimali - Ministre d'Etat chargé de la Justice, assurant l'intérim du Président de la République et des Ministres du Plan et de la Coopération, du Commerce et de l'Industrie

Various Ministries (working group) /
Divers Ministères (séance de travail)

M. Tchoua - Chef de Cabinet au Ministère du Plan et de la Coopération

M. Pounzi - Ministère du Plan

M. Farra-Bond - Directeur de la Planification

M. Darlan - Directeur de la Coopération, Ministère du Plan

M. Koyamba - Directeur de la Statistique

M. Gowami - Service des Organisations internationales

M. J. Compagnon - Conseiller Technique au Ministère du Plan

M. Courtant - Ministère d'Etat chargé de l'Agriculture

M. Raphael Ligoussou - Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

M. Jean Adouma - Direction de l'Agriculture

M. Doui - Ministère du Commerce

UDEAC

M. Nitoud - Directeur de l'Agence comptable Inter-Etats

Brazzaville (People's Republic of the Congo) - 25-27 June 1970

Brazzaville (République Populaire du Congo) - 25-27 juin 1970

26 June 1970 / 26 juin 1970

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) /
Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD)

M. Manoussou - Représentant Résident

M. Perrin - Représentant Résident-Adjoint

Planning /
Plan

M. Maumazalay - Deuxième Secrétaire du Parti, Coordinateur du Plan

World Health Organization (WHO) /
Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (OMS)

Dr. Quenum - Directeur régional

Various /
Divers

Professeur Lissouba - Président de la 9e session de la CEA

Douala (Cameroon) - 26-29 June 1970

Douala (Cameroun) - 26-29 juin 1970

27 June 1970 / 27 juin 1970

Directing Committee of the UDEAC /
Comité de Direction de l'UDEAC

M. Bidias Bernard - Ministre des Finances du Cameroun, Président en exercice

UDEAC (Secretariat) /
UDEAC (Secrétariat)

M. Onana Awana - Secrétaire Général

M. Anchouey - Secrétaire Général Adjoint

M. Guillaume Koukou - Directeur de la 1ère Division

Gabonese Delegation /
Délégation gabonaise

M. Mbouy-Boutzit - Ministre des Affaires Economiques

M. Paul Moukambi - Conseiller personnel du Président de la République

Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo) 29 June - 6 July 1970 /
Kinshasa (République démocratique du Congo) - 29 juin - 6 juillet 1970

1 July 1970 - 1 juillet 1970

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) /
Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD)

M. P. Sales - Représentant Résident a.i.

2 July 1970 / 2 juillet 1970

Various Ministries (working group) /
Divers Ministères (séance de travail)

M. Julien Kasongo - Directeur de Cabinet du Ministre des Affaires
Etrangères

M. Gustave Malumba - Directeur de Cabinet du Ministre de l'Economie
Nationale

M. Raoul Dongue - Directeur-Adjoint de Cabinet, Ministère des Affaires
Etrangères

4 July 1970 / 4 juillet 1970

Ministry of National Economy /
Ministère de l'Economie Nationale

S.E. M. Thomas Loango - Ministre

M. Gustave Malumba - Directeur de Cabinet

Kigali (Rwanda) - 6-8 July 1970 /

Kigali (Rwanda) - 6-8 juillet 1970

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) /
Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD)

M. Fall - Représentant Résident

Various Ministries (working group) /
Divers Ministères (séance de travail)

M. Gashonga - Ministre délégué à la Présidence de la République, chargé
des Affaires Economiques et Financières

M. Emmanuel Kaberuka - Secrétaire Général-Adjoint, Ministère de la
Coopération

M. Celestin Ndavijiniyano - Directeur Général, Présidence de la République

M. Claude Bahintasi - Directeur des Affaires Economiques, Ministère de la
Coopération

M. Jean-Marie Mbaguta - Directeur de la Planification régionale,
Secrétariat d'Etat au Plan National de développement

M. Narcisse Munyambaraga - Directeur de la Planification globale,
Secrétariat d'Etat au Plan National

Secretary of State for Planning /
Secrétariat d'Etat au Plan

M. Narcisse Munyambaraga - Directeur de la Planification globale

Bujumbura (Burundi) - 8-10 July 1970 /
Bujumbura (Burundi) - 8-10 juillet 1970

8 July 1970 - 8 juillet 1970.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) /
Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (PNUD)

M. Lessard - Représentant Résident-Adjoint

Various Ministries (working group) /
Divers Ministères (séance de travail)

M. Gaspard Karenzo - Directeur Général de l'Economie, Ministère de l'Economie

M. Pontien Ntmanza - Conseiller et Chef de Bureau d'Etudes Economiques, Ministère de l'Economie

M. Aloys Ntamagara - Directeur du Commerce et de l'Industries, Ministère de l'Economie

M. Aloïs Barakikana - Directeur-adjoint du Commerce

M. Joseph Kandeke - Chef de Bureau du Commerce extérieur

M. Siméon Sibomana - Directeur de la Coopération Internationale, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

9 July 1970 / 9 juillet 1970

Ministry of National Economy /
Ministère de l'Economie Nationale

S.E. le Commandant Ndayahoze - Ministre de l'Economie

Ministry of Planning /
Ministère du Plan

M. Patrice Ntchorubuze - Directeur Général

M. André Bibwa - Conseiller au Plan

10 July 1970 / 10 juillet 1970

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation /
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et de la Coopération

S.E. M. Libère Ndobakwaje - Ministre

M. Bonaventure Kidwingira - Président, Banque de la République

ANNEX II

LIST OF INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

1. Union Douanière et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC)
Members: Cameroon, People's Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic
Headquarters: Bangui (Central African Republic)
2. Union des Etats d'Afrique Centrale (UEAC)
Members: Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad
Headquarters: Fort-Lamy (Chad)
3. Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique Equatoriale et du Cameroun
Members: Cameroon, Central African Republic, People's Republic of the Congo, Gabon
Headquarters: Paris (France)
4. Union Monétaire de l'Afrique Equatoriale et du Cameroun
Members: Cameroon, Central African Republic, People's Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Chad
Headquarters: Paris (France)
5. Organisation de Coordination pour la lutte contre les Grandes Endémies en Afrique Centrale
Members: Cameroon, Gabon, Central African Republic, People's Republic of the Congo
Headquarters: Yaoundé (Cameroon)
6. Union Douanière Equatoriale
Members: People's Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Gabon, Chad
Headquarters: Brazzaville (People's Republic of the Congo)
(Note: In process of dissolution)

7. Fondation de l'Enseignement Supérieur en Afrique Centrale
Members: Central African Republic, People's Republic of the
Congo, Gabon, Chad, France
Headquarters: Brazzaville (People's Republic of the Congo)

Note:

Besides the above inter-governmental organizations, there is a large number of other organizations with membership extending beyond the Central African sub-region but in which the Central African States constitute a significant portion of the membership. Some of these organizations are the Common Organization of African and Malagasy States (OCAM), the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Union Africaine et Malgache des Postes et Télécommunications (OAMPT) and the Air Afrique.

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