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COMMITTEE II

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

held at Africa Hall, Addis Ababa,
on Friday, 21 February 1964, at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. KAMITATU (Congo (Leopoldville))

Secretary: Mr. STAMENKOVIC

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- Election of Vice-Chairman and Drafting Committee.
- Economic and social trends in Africa and review of the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa
 - (b) Social development

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ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN AND DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Mr. ZAYAITI (Tunisia) was elected Vice-Chairman.

Mr. SAVIDETOVE (Togo) Mr. SEBTI (Morocco) and Malam BAKO (Nigeria)
were elected to serve as a Drafting Committee.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TRENDS IN AFRICA AND REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (agenda item 5)

(b) Social Development (E/CN.14/241, 269)

Mr. RIBY-WILLIAMS (Secretariat) described the new structure of the Social Affairs Section of the secretariat, its proposed objectives for the year 1964-1965 and the years ahead, and how it hoped to attain those objectives. The Section would be glad to have the Committee's comments, advice and instructions on the new phase of its work. In particular, the Committee might wish to adopt a recommendation that a standing committee on social development be established.

The structure of the Social Affairs Section had been re-organized and its objectives and programme of work and priorities re-defined. The Section would in future consist of four inter-related operational units: Social Investigation Unit, Social Welfare Unit, Social Policy and Development Unit, and Rural Life and Institutions Unit.

The Social Investigation Unit would be responsible for: general and country case studies of patterns of social service organization and administration in the African region; investigations into organizational and operational problems of specific urban and rural welfare services to determine the scope of the problem, the measures to be taken and methods of operation; studies of problems of social origin, affecting industrialization or arising from industrialization or urbanization or both; and production of monographs from the studies and investigations undertaken.

The Social Welfare Unit would concentrate wholly on operational problems and projects of social work organization and administration. It would be responsible for: arranging regional meetings, training courses and workshops; maintaining close relations with national correspondents

on social work appointed by the Economic Commission for Africa; and maintaining close liaison with international voluntary social work agencies with which the Economic Commission for Africa had established regular contact. In 1964 a regional meeting on social defence would be organized as a joint ECA/BSA project; in 1965 the Expert Committee on Social Welfare and Community Development would be convened to consider the types of social welfare services needed in Africa, and it was hoped that a workshop on the organization and administration of family, child and youth services would also take place that year. Plans had been made for a regional workshop on the organization and administration of programmes for the rehabilitation of the disabled, and for a study tour on social defence, to take place in 1966.

The Social Policy and Development Unit would be advised and assisted by representatives of the specialized agencies and of UNICEF and would work in close collaboration with the ECA/FAO Joint Division of Agriculture. It was expected that a regional adviser on social development would be appointed to assist the Unit. The Unit would be responsible for: assistance to governments in the planning of social programmes needed to accelerate economic development, comparative analysis and evaluation of social aspects of African development plans; collection and exchange of information on the experience of the Economic Commission for Africa member countries, and other countries, in regard to social policies and programmes dealing with the problems of urbanization; assistance and advice to the Section's Social Welfare and Rural Life and Institutions Units in this programming, and advice to the region in all social welfare service fields. The programme of the Unit would involve co-operation with UNICEF and WHO in defining the problems of high infant and child mortality rates, particularly in rural Africa, the main communicable diseases afflicting African children, and the appropriate measures to be taken in meeting the health needs of African children.

The Rural Life and Institutions Unit had formerly been known as the Community Development Unit. Its work and philosophy had been re-fashioned and in future it would concentrate on assisting governments to develop active rural life and rural institutions in order to meet contemporary needs, with the fullest possible involvement of the local rural people themselves, and, on undertaking studies and investigations of socio-economic situations encountered by national and local governments in the process of rural development. The new policy was based on knowledge of the basic contemporary needs of rural communities in Africa and on the wish to find ways and means whereby the levels of living and welfare of rural people could be improved through their increased participation in development. The basic contemporary needs of rural African communities were: the need for sufficient land and improvement of the land to ensure a minimum decent living for the peasant and his family; water for irrigation and for drinking; adequate credit facilities for production purposes; access roads to markets; health and satisfactory nutrition; and schools and educational facilities. The Unit's work would consist of: field studies in depth of socio-economic problems encountered by member governments in the development and improvement of rural life and institutions to meet contemporary needs and possibilities, including the study of agrarian structure, rural resettlement and land reform, rural water supplies, agricultural extension, nutrition and health extension, home economics, co-operatives and rural credit; the collection and exchange of information; assistance to member governments in the planning, implementation and evaluation of unified rural development programmes; and regional meetings, including workshops and seminars, also study tours, for administrators and directors of national, regional or local unified rural development programmes.

The role of the Section with respect to the training of social workers would gradually shift from actual training projects to improving existing schools and institutes, preferably on a sub-regional basis to enable each sub-region to meet its own training needs. The immediate objectives of the Section would be: the establishment of sub-regional

training centres for social work; training of instructors in social work, and specialized training of administrative, professional and technical staff responsible for the organization and operation of social welfare programmes; and assistance to individual member governments in the organization of periodic in-service training courses for social workers, including voluntary and auxiliary workers.

In 1964 a technical training course on the institutional treatment of juvenile offenders would be organized at the Cairo National Centre of Social and Criminological Research. A second training course for instructors in social work and administrators of in-service training programmes had also been scheduled.

A directory of social welfare activities in Africa would be compiled together with a register of institutes and schools of social work in Africa. It would be the constant concern of the various units of the Social Affairs Section, working as a team, to review from time to time the various objectives and programmes outlined.

Mr. BROUGH (Kenya) wondered whether it really was necessary to set up a new standing committee on social development. There had been a move at the Fifth Session to reduce the number of standing committees.

Mr. RIBY-WILLIAMS (secretariat) pointed out that there was as yet no standing committee in the field of social affairs.

ATO Afework ZELEKE (Ethiopia), supported by Malam BAKO (Nigeria), welcomed the reorganization of the Social Affairs Section, but felt that consideration of the question of setting up a standing committee should be deferred to a later date.

Mr. SEBTI (Morocco), supported by Mr. SAM (Ghana), thought that the question ought to be discussed at once by the Committee, not deferred.

Mr. KONE (Mali) said that his delegation could not express an opinion in the matter until it had had time to reflect upon the statement made by the representative of the secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the discussion on the Social Affairs Section be suspended in order to allow delegations time to reflect upon the statement in question.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN invited the representative of UNESCO to introduce the paper, Adult Literacy and Economic and Social Development (E/CN.14/269), presented by UNESCO.

Mr. OCHS (UNESCO) emphasized the importance of literacy as a factor in economic and social development. Widespread literacy was crucial for the emergence of a modern society, and the absence of adequate adult literacy activities was likely to contribute to the failure of development plans. The fact that at one and the same session the General Assembly had adopted a resolution on the Development Decade and another on co-operation for the eradication of illiteracy throughout the world, was significant.

The document under discussion examined the illiteracy situation in Africa, suggested ways of remedying it and studied the role of literacy in development. It ended with a series of recommendations to which delegations, it was hoped, would pay particular attention.

Any recommendations the Committee might make would be submitted to the Conference of African Ministers of Education which UNESCO was organizing in Abidjan in March 1964, and would be a valued contribution to the planning of education.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of the Congo (Leopoldville), strongly supported a campaign for adult literacy along the lines recommended in the paper presented by UNESCO, but asked for clarification on three points. First, was the responsibility for action to lie with individual governments? Secondly, were countries expected to contribute 5 per cent of their national budget towards financing the campaign? It would be difficult for countries like his own, whose budgets were already heavily committed for education, to make such a large contribution. Thirdly, had UNESCO, in co-operation with ECA, considered ways of obtaining finance for the programme?

Mr. OCHS (UNESCO) said that, in connexion with the first point, while his Organization would give all the help it could by making available its experience elsewhere and by co-ordinating activities in the regions, the campaign would essentially rely on national action, because of the large number of problems which were peculiar to particular countries and could therefore only be handled by the countries themselves. Regarding the second point, the figure of 5 per cent referred to national education budgets. Lastly, negotiations on finance were in progress between the United Nations Secretary-General and the Director-General of UNESCO.

MR. THOMAS (Guinea) stressed the importance of including both full child education and adult literacy in any scheme for economic and social development. There could be no progress without literate adults, because only literates could acquire the necessary technical and professional qualifications. ECA should be asked to co-operate with UNESCO and the Organization of African Unity in launching a campaign for literacy in Africa and in providing experts to help governments with their special problems.

MR. KONE (Mali) suggested that, together the recommendations contained in the final paragraph of the document under discussion, consideration should be given to the statement of the Addis Ababa Conference on the Development of Education in Africa quoted in paragraph 23 of that document.

Ato Afework ZELEKE (Ethiopia) said that the importance of literacy in economic and social development was particularly relevant to the African countries. He suggested that a resolution be adopted promising ECA's co-operation with UNESCO in implementing United Nations General Assembly resolution 1937(XVIII). He would support a joint resolution on the subject if other representatives were contemplating proposing one along those lines.

Mr. EDOKPAYI (Secretariat) introduced the chapter of the Report on the World Situation dealing with Development in Africa (E/CN.14/244). During the 1950's, the period covered and the document, there had been substantial, if uneven, progress, particularly in education and health, while per capita income had risen to over \$120 and living standards generally had greatly improved. But levels of social advancement still remained pitifully low.

The traditional social structure had been modified by the expansion of a money economy, the rise of new political systems, and the spread of Western education, culture and ideas. New social and economic groups had grown up which no longer had their roots in the traditional ties of kinship. Greater emphasis was being placed on the individual, and the character of family and group leadership was changing. Efforts have been made to adapt traditional African institutions and ways of life to Western systems, while retaining the essence of traditional social structure and communal fellowship. The process however has not been easy, and African social life had shown considerable resilience to Western-induced forces of change. The problem now facing the **region** was how to bring about the adaptation necessary to achieve a higher standard of living with the least possible social cost and delay.

There were four main fields in which the social framework had changed. First, population increase. This had been much greater in towns, as a result urban social services had been strained, while the exodus of youth from rural areas had affected progress in agriculture and produced social tensions in some countries. Second, education. Though there had been a marked expansion at all levels, the demand for education had grown faster than the supply of facilities and African governments had had to adopt ambitious educational programmes at the expense of other essential services. There

was a shortage of funds and of trained teachers, and a need to plan school curricula and teaching methods to meet African requirements. In some countries, failure to integrate educational programmes with development planning had resulted in a new problem of unemployment among school leavers. Thirdly, health. The situation had greatly improved through programmes of preventive and curative medicines, but health conditions generally were still poor and facilities were grossly inadequate. Fourth, food production and consumption. Production of subsistence crops had expanded less than that of export crops, but had kept pace with growth in population. The quality of food however had not been good, and although there had been no widespread famine, seasonal deficiencies in calorie consumption and in certain vitamins had been regular features especially in the savannah areas. Nutritional health had not greatly improved and more research and education were needed.

Progress achieved in the rural situation had been due mainly to the establishment of new agricultural organizations and to rural development programmes involving participation by the people. Various types of land reform had been carried out in different countries, supported by credit facilities, co-operative organizations and technical advisory services, and community development programmes had been launched ranging from the provision of adult education facilities to the stimulation of new attitudes favourable to social and economic change.

In urban societies, there had been three major areas of social change. First, the level of wage employment had risen, although in some countries the total labour force remained less than ten per cent of the total working population. An increasing number of women had entered the labour market and there was a high level of unemployment and under-employment among urban people. Efforts had been made to increase measures for stabilizing wage labour. Secondly, in housing and urbanization there had been relatively little progress owing to the phenomenal growth in urban population and the backlog of overcrowded and dilapidated housing. Governments, however, had assumed increasing responsibility for the problem. Thirdly, the growth in urban population and the new

emphasis on the individual had given rise to a need for social security schemes, while the drift to the towns had necessitated programmes for adaptation to urban life and improved welfare services, which both government and voluntary organizations were increasingly providing.

For the first time in many countries efforts had been made to rationalize the process of social change through integrated planning.

A tremendous task lay ahead: to bridge the social gap between the African and the more developed regions, and between the wealthy and the poor sections of the same community. The task could not be carried out without planning for accelerated growth and for a balance between social and economic programmes.

Mr. NOAH (Sierra Leone) said that though standards of living in African countries had undoubtedly improved there was still much to be desired, particularly in respect of the relative standards in rural and urban regions. One of the greatest problems in rural development was the exodus of young people to the towns and their reluctance to return once they had been educated and become accustomed to urban life; farmers, too, were leaving the countryside, thus further contributing to the gradual desertion of villages and to urban overcrowding. He hoped that the problem would be studied and that efforts would be made to solve it.

Mr. SAM (Ghana) particularly commended the document under discussion for the emphasis it placed on the effects of modern life on the individual's relationship with his community, and on the difference between traditional customs and those imposed by Western influences. Although the pattern of Western behaviour had an unhealthy effect on Africa, progress was important and should not be halted: a balance should be maintained between old and new. The problems of employment, housing, transport, education, family groupings, health and migration, dealt with in the document, should be kept in mind as essential elements in economic planning. There was also a need for country demographic studies.

With regard to the problem of the migration of young people to the cities, he suggested that organizations should be formed to encourage them to return

to the land. The Workers' Brigade in Ghana had achieved good results by giving its members a feeling of pride in their work on the land. The problem of young people should, however, be taken in the context of land improvement, for proper use of the land was a social problem which involved the whole community.

Sayed Haroun El AWAD (Sudan) observed that despite the efforts of African governments many social problems still remained: mass poverty, rapid growth in population, low living standards, shortage and poor quality of food, and the effects of the migration to urban areas. One of the principal causes of that migration was the low level of incomes; and it was clear that economic and social problems could not be separated.

Mr. OCHS (UNESCO) said the development of education was inseparably bound up with economic and social development in general. Since the Addis Ababa Conference on education, UNESCO had been assisting national groups of educational planners with the help of the ILO. There was a double link between education and economics: financially, education ought to be planned in relation to the probable growth of the gross national product, the foreseeable national income at a given date and the proportion available for education; which, more important still, educational planning ought to take into account the needs of manpower in the anticipated economic development in various sectors.

The problem of unemployment was not necessarily caused by the rapid expansion of primary education; where, say, 20 per cent of children were receiving primary education, there was usually unemployment because school attendance was regarded as a qualification for a particular job: but the problem did not arise where school attendance was say 80 per cent. Unemployment was usually caused by the migration from rural areas, and that would not occur if primary education were better adapted to preparation for rural life. An important point was that the expansion of primary education ought to be planned in relation to secondary school facilities: part of the answer would be to provide more of such facilities.

The problem was a very complex one. Its solutions would perhaps be to meet the numerical needs of manpower by providing educational facilities at various levels and of various types, and to adopt education quantitatively to the requirements of economic and social development.

Mr. EDOKPAYI (Secretariat) stressed the importance of planning rural and urban developments together as a combined economic and social problem. People would have to be provided not only with amenities but with the means to pay for them.

Mr. SAM (Ghana) said that what had emerged from the discussion was the need to alter mental attitudes towards the rural areas: it was not simply a question of trying to secure better urban conditions or to increase the output of educated people.

Mr. Malam BAKO (Nigeria) thought that improved housing, health, water and other facilities in rural areas might help to stem the flow of people to the cities. He wondered whether ECA had considered providing financial or other assistance to achieve that end. As to housing, it was important to remember that modern western buildings, though attractive, were not necessarily the buildings best suited to Africa: there was too much readiness to substitute western ways for African without proper thought.

Mr. HOCINE (Algeria) suggested that the discussion should be postponed until the following day so that delegations might reflect upon the various problems and study their possible solutions.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.