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REPORT OF THE MEETING ON
THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
IN NORTH AFRICA

(Addis Ababa, 17-20 February 1964)

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INTRODUCTION

1. A meeting on the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa in North Africa during 1964 - 1965 was held in Addis Ababa on 17, 18 and 20 February 1964. The following countries took part in the meeting: Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and the United Arab Republic; the Sudanese delegation was unable to arrive in time to participate in the first two days of the meeting. The list of delegates will be found in the annex.
2. In his opening address, the Executive Secretary recalled the establishment of a sub-regional office for North Africa in Tangier in October and November 1963, of a sub-regional office for West Africa at Niamey and also the assignment of a representative of the Executive Secretary for East Africa to Lusaka. The decentralization brought about by the establishment of these sub-regional offices should result in giving the programme of work of the Economic Commission for Africa for the years 1964 and 1965 a more concrete character. In the past, too many meetings had taken place on the all-Africa level and had ended with recommendations of a general character which had not been subsequently carried out. The programme of work of the Economic Commission for Africa for 1964/1965 should comprise fewer meetings and more negotiations regarding projects for concerted action, to be followed by positive results. This did not exclude the presence in the programme of work of a certain number of projects dealing with Africa as a whole, such as the Sixth Session would not fail to recommend. Nevertheless, the Executive Secretary considered that it would be useful to submit the

~~draft programme, as prepared by the secretariat, to a sub-regional meeting.~~
so as to allow the secretariat to submit suggestions and recommendations on a sub-regional basis and of a positive nature to the Sixth Session of the Commission. The Executive-Secretary concluded by wishing the meeting the greatest possible success in its work.

3. On the proposal of the delegate of Algeria, the meeting unanimously elected Mr. LOFTI IBRAHIM, delegate of the United Arab Republic, Director General of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the United Arab Republic, as Chairman. It was decided not to elect a vice-chairman.

4. On the basis of the provisional agenda, the meeting then decided to adopt the following agenda:

- (a) Review of past developments and activities of the Tangier office.
- (b) Submission of the draft programme of work of the Economic Commission for Africa in 1964 - 1965 by the secretariat.
- (c) Suggestions and recommendations.
- (d) Adoption of the report.

5. The present report was adopted by the meeting at a session held on 20 February 1964.

Brief account of the work of the Tangier office

6. The Secretary of the meeting gave a brief summary of the work of the Tangier office since its establishment, and mentioned in particular two projects, namely co-operation in the field of statistics matters and the industrial co-ordination mission.

7. A meeting on statistics and national accounts in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia is to be held during the first six months of 1964, at the request of these countries. The aim of this meeting is the standardization of statistical nomenclature and also the adoption of a common system for national accounts, so as to facilitate future economic surveys on these countries. This meeting will be followed at the beginning of 1965 by a meeting on statistical co-operation in the sub-region as a whole.

8. An industrial co-ordination mission visited the four following countries in January 1964: Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. This mission followed similar missions which visited West Africa and East Africa in 1963. In its report (E/CN.14/248 dated 5 February 1964) the industrial co-ordination mission described the market situation and industrial projects in the following sectors: energy, mineral extraction, fertilizers, iron and steel, metal working and engineering, chemical industries, pulp and paper, glass, cement and textiles. In a number of cases, and specially in the sectors of heavy industry, where the scale of production must necessarily be large in order to ensure the economic viability of projects, the mission concluded that it was necessary to achieve harmonization of industrial plans on the basis of an international division of work between the four countries visited, and in some cases within a wider geographical range. Failing that, many industrial projects would not be implemented since the markets of each individual country were too small to make the construction of a plant profitable. The mission therefore regarded the setting up of permanent machinery for consultation and negotiation between the countries visited to co-ordinate their industrial development as a matter of urgency. Certain suggestions for further action along these lines are presented in part 3 of the mission's report.

9. Following this survey, the meeting congratulated the Economic Development Division at Economic Commission for Africa Headquarters and the Tangier office on the work they have done in connexion with industrial co-ordination. Wide agreement was reached by the delegations of the four countries visited concerning the contents and conclusions of the report of the Industrial Co-ordination Mission; taking into account that the Libyan delegation expressed his government's agreement in principle. It was also clearly revealed that the co-ordination of industrial development in these four countries should naturally be supplemented both by similarly co-ordinated programmes within other countries of the sub-region and groups of African countries and by the co-ordination of industrial plans between those groups. The detailed recommendations emerging from the discussions at the meeting and concerning action to be taken during 1964 and 1965 on the basis of the report of the Industrial Co-ordination Mission are given at the end of this report.

General statement of draft programme of the Economic Commission
for Africa's activities in 1964 and 1965

10. The heads of the various departments of the Economic Commission for Africa secretariat informed the meeting of the main projects included in the 1964-1965 work programme in the following fields: economic development, industrialization, natural resources, transport and communications, housing, cartography, statistics, public administration, social advancement, trade, agricultural development.

11. The Economic Development Division will delegate to the Tangier office, first, the organization of advisory services for economic planning in the countries of the sub-region and, second, research work into long-term economic projections for those countries. The projections should throw light on long-term consequences of policies of economic integration.

12. The industrialization work programme emphasizes industrial co-ordination missions in the sub-regions. The countries which were not visited in 1963 can, if they so desire, be visited in 1964-1965. In addition, all-African meetings will be held for the iron and steel industry and for petroleum and natural gas to co-ordinate the programmes of the sub-regions in these two sectors. Reference was also made to the following projects: a regional meeting on industrial programming (Cairo, 1965); arrangement in 1965 of a training course on industrial planning and programming (planned to take place at Cairo within the programme of the Dakar Institute of Economic Development and Planning); the creation of sub-regional institutes for applied industrial research; the development of the Nile Basin; co-ordination of telecommunications throughout Africa (in co-ordination with the ITU); rationalization of air transport (in co-operation with the ICAO); a special study of trans-Sahara transport problems.

13. With regard to statistics, it is worth recalling the extensive training programme encouraged or sponsored by the Economic Commission for Africa in North Africa (centres at Rabat, Addis Ababa and Cairo). In addition, three of the five regional advisers on statistics are at present working in North Africa. Finally, a study tour on the relation of statistics to planning and a seminar on labour statistics (to be carried out jointly with ILO) are planned for 1964.

14. In a related field, mention should be made of two courses planned for 1964 but the Dakar Institute of Economic Development and Planning: one at Tunis on planning methods and the other at Cairo on education and manpower planning.

15. In the field of public administration, the following projects are of particular interest to North Africa; a conference in May 1964 of directors of public administration institutes, a seminar on organization and methods to be given in French which may be held in North Africa; the organization of advisory services, and a study made in conjunction with UNESCO on the training of administrative staff in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

16. A number of projects relating to social advancement are to be noted, including the organization of advisory services and studies on the social consequences of industrialization, the socio-economic problems of rural development and on family, children and youth welfare. In addition, meetings of groups of experts will be held to study social welfare services and social defence in Africa. Lastly, training courses have been planned for instructors in social work and for officers in institutions for the treatment of juvenile delinquents.

17. In connexion with trade, the recommendations made by the Standing Committee on Trade at its second session in November 1963 on the African common market and on the problems to be discussed at the World Trade Conference should be borne in mind. The meeting on the African payments union was held at Tangier in 1964. Advisory services on export promotion will be available to member countries of the Economic Commission for Africa.

18. The Trade and Survey Division has seconded one of its experts to Tangier more particularly for the analysis of development problems and policies in the sub-region and the periodical study of the economic situation in North Africa as part of the preparatory work for the publication of the Economic Bulletin of the Economic Commission for Africa.

19. Apart from the specific activities of the FAO in North Africa (desert locust control, the World Food Programme, etc.), the following joint FAO/ECA Agricultural Division activities may be mentioned: a regional conference to be held in 1964 on animal production and health; a meeting of experts and a study tour on problems involved in the transition from subsistence to market agriculture; a training course on agricultural credit planned for 1965; a study on trade in agricultural products within the sub-regions; research into the processing of agricultural products; the survey of timber resources and requirements in each of the sub-regions.

Conclusions and recommendations

20. The meeting noted with interest the activities planned for 1964-1965 as reported orally. In accordance with the Executive Secretary's opening statement, the meeting also expressed the wish that immediate action should be taken on the report of the Industrial Co-ordination Mission to North Africa.

21. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary was requested to convene ad hoc commissions to implement the recommendations of the Industrial Co-ordination Mission's report as early as possible. These commissions would normally include representatives of two, three or four of the countries dealt with in the report, depending on the problems considered, and the secretariat for meetings of the commissions would be provided by the Tangier office. The commissions would be:

- (a) A commission on industrial co-ordination proper;
- (b) A commission on the harmonization of trade policies vis-à-vis the major economic groupings (including problems of customs and commercial integration between the countries dealt with in the report);
- (c) A commission on energy and mineral resources.

22. Two further commissions may also be set up in the more distant future:

- a commission on manpower and technical training and
- a commission on transport. During the first stage of its work this latter commission would include representatives of the four countries dealt with in the report; it might be enlarged at a later stage to include all the countries of the sub-region.

23. The sub-regional office in Tangier should undertake as soon as possible an over-all study of ways in which the four countries can co-operate in the field of energy in all its aspects - petroleum, gas, electricity, etc.

24. The Tangier office should also give priority to a study of the prospective development of the North African market for finished steel products, taking into account other possible markets in Africa and in Europe. The study should also include recommendations on methods of reaching an agreement on rolling programmes in the iron and steel industries in the countries concerned.

25. The sub-regional office in Tangier should also prepare, as soon as possible, a preliminary draft project for a centre for industrial surveys. This preliminary draft should be submitted for the approval of the countries wishing to participate in the centre and would later be submitted to the United Nations Special Fund in the form of a request for assistance. The activity of the centre could include:

- Revision, on demand, of feasibility studies completed in individual countries;
- direct study of projects of common interest, both at the preliminary and at the final stage;
- applied research in certain sectors, for example, industries for processing of agricultural products, textile industry.

26. With regard to engineering industries, the countries concerned would carry out an inventory of maintenance and general engineering workshops including foundries. They would arrange the necessary contacts to make possible a co-ordinated policy, in particular for the manufacture of assembly components (for cars, tractors, engines, etc.). The sub-regional office in Tangier would then undertake a general study of the engineering industries.

27. Other studies concerning individual sectors should be carried out in due course by the Tangier office, particularly in the petro-chemical industry, where co-operation appears desirable not only within North Africa, but within the African market as a whole; in the pulp and paper industry - including esparto; in the artificial textile industry, etc. Decisions on the need for these studies could be made in the early meetings of the ad hoc commission on industrial co-ordination.